



Amir receives Crown Prince, PM & senior gov't ministers Page 2



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KUWAIT ROLLS OUT NEW RULEBOOK FOR RIDE-HAILING APPS

Every ride now on camera

Data logs mandatory Drivers face tougher entry rules Non-compliant apps risk shutdown

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The official gazette "Kuwait al-Yaum" has published Ministerial Resolution No. 893/2026 issued by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, regarding the regulation of passenger transport and brokerage activities via electronic applications, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The resolution specifies the controls and conditions governing the work of companies, institutions, drivers, and vehicles operating in this sector. Article 1 of the resolution stipulates that companies or institutions must be officially authorized to conduct commercial activity in accordance with the Traffic Law, its executive regulations, and relevant ministerial decisions. They are also required to obtain a license from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and prior approval from the General Traffic Department, in addition to having a designated official location for conducting business, as re-

quired by the General Traffic Department. The resolution mandates that companies and institutions maintain an electronic log containing vehicle movements, trip details, carrier information, items transported, vehicle details, driver information, and the time and date of pickup and delivery. They are required to retain this data and provide any passenger data to the relevant authorities upon request. Companies are obligated to conduct only the licensed activity and are prohibited from using the electronic application for any other unlicensed activity. The decision mandates the installation of surveillance cameras inside passenger transport vehicles, with recordings to be retained for a minimum of 120 days. Any passenger data must be handed over upon request by the relevant authorities. Article Three outlines seven conditions for Kuwaiti citizens to engage in passenger transport activities via electronic applications: 1. They must be of good character and must not have been convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude or dishonesty, unless their civil

rights have been restored, nor have they been involved in serious traffic accidents, or been caught driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs, psychotropic substances, or any other substances that impair their natural faculties, as evidenced by a criminal record certificate issued by the General Department of Criminal Evidence. 2. They must be at least 21 years of age. 3. The vehicle must be air-conditioned, clean inside and out, and meet all safety and durability requirements specified in the executive regulations of the Traffic Law and its supplementary ministerial decrees and amendments. 4. The vehicle must not be older than three years from the date of manufacture, and its service must cease upon reaching seven years of age from the date of manufacture. It must also be owned by the same individual. 5. The vehicle must be designed to transport a minimum of three passengers and a maximum of seven passengers, in addition to the driver.

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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Will al-Zaidi restore glory to the afflicted Iraq?

DURING the Abbasid era, Baghdad was known as the "City of Knowledge and Books", home to the "House of Wisdom Library", a haven for scholars, thinkers, and innovators.

This library remained so until 1258 CE, when it was invaded by the Mongols under Hulagu Khan. The Mongols burned thousands of books and manuscripts, destroying Baghdad's library. Yet, each time, Iraq rose from the ashes and recovered its former glory. Iraq has always been rich in food, providing sustenance not only for its own people but also for neighboring nations.

This historical overview demonstrates that Iraq has always been an arena for major events, marked by periods of decline followed by periods of resurgence. This pattern was repeated in modern times by a few reckless individuals who sought to seize everything and monopolize power, ultimately succeeding in overthrowing the monarchy in 1958. This coup involved barbaric acts, encouraged by their supporters, such as the dragging of dissidents through the streets, a heinous crime against humanity that was unprecedented in Baghdad's history.

Since July 14, 1958, Iraq has witnessed numerous coup attempts perpetrated by elements within the ruling establishment. Saddam Hussein seized power in 1979 through a coup, just months after Khomeini's coup against the Shah of Iran. It seems the region was destined to experience the convergence of two bloody, repressive regimes, each seeking to export its internal problems abroad by instigating wars. These began with the Iran-Iraq War, Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, and the subsequent formation of an Iranian axis that brought turmoil to a region that has known no stability since that fateful year when the regimes of Saddam Hussein and Khomeini came to power in Iraq and Iran.

The most significant turning point in this trajectory occurred in 2003 when Tehran was rewarded by Washington with control over Iraq's destiny as a price for its assistance in the invasion. Since then, Baghdad has become a hub for terrorism in the region, facilitating further Iranian expansion into several Arab states.

Iranian proxies have entrenched corruption in every facet of Iraqi society. The amount of Iraqi public funds looted since

2003 exceeded one trillion US dollars, according to international and even Iraqi reports.

The Abbasid Caliph Al-Nasir li-Din Allah restored the prestige of the government, developed Iraq's economy, and eradicated corruption. Today, after the major events that have plunged Iraq into poverty and allowed Iranian proxies to control state institutions to finance terrorism, a new force has emerged, known in the Iraqi capital as the "Third Way," represented by the new Prime Minister, Ali al-Zaidi.

Just as Caliph Al-Nasir li-Din Allah saved the Abbasid Caliphate in its final phase, al-Zaidi is working to cleanse his country, not only of financial corruption but also of the sectarian power-sharing system designed and imposed on Lebanon by Hezbollah. For almost forty years, Hezbollah has transformed Lebanon into a mere pie, with each faction receiving a predetermined share.

Baghdad today is qualified to reclaim its status as a capital of knowledge and literature, but only if the new prime minister succeeds in his project, monopolizes weapons and power in the hands of the state, and firmly cracks down on corruption and those who perpetrate it.

It has been said that everyone has a share of the meaning of their name. The Caliph Al-Nasir li-Din Allah means "the one who defends the faith." Indeed, Caliph Nasir al-Din was able to fulfill the Arabic meaning of his name. Hopefully, the Iraqi Prime Minister, Ali al-Zaidi, will also have a share of the meaning of his name, which signifies increase or surplus.

The Iraqi people have suffered from deficiencies in everything, while the pockets of public funds thieves have swelled. May al-Zaidi be able to restore the prestige of the state and return Baghdad to its rightful place as a center of wisdom.

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His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development (KFAED), Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, speaks during the press conference held at the KFAED's headquarters.

Kuwait expands crisis response capacity

KFAED launches \$100 mln emergency fund

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development (KFAED), Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, announced the launch of the Kuwait Emergency Response Fund, a strategic national initiative with an initial capital of US\$100 million (equivalent to approximately KWD 30 million), to be managed and fully overseen by the Kuwait Fund for Development, in support of national preparedness and to strengthen the capacity to face challenges and exceptional circumstances.

In his remarks during the press conference held at the KFAED's headquarters today, Sunday, His Excellency affirmed that the launch of this national initiative embodies the values of responsibility, solidarity, and mutual support upon which the State of Kuwait was founded, and reflects its continued commitment to developing institutional tools and enhancing the readiness of state institutions to deal with emerging developments and emergency situations, in a manner that helps protect national gains, preserve the country's stability, and sustain its vital facilities.

His Excellency said: "This fund establishes an integrated institutional mechanism to mobilize local funding in support of the State of Kuwait's efforts to address the effects and damage inflicted on national infrastructure by the Iranian aggression. This mechanism draws on the institutional expertise the Kuwait Fund for Development has gained in overseeing development and infrastructure projects across the world, placing that expertise in the service of national efforts to repair the damage resulting from the aggression."

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New law speeds travel ban orders

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Decree Law No. 68/2026 amends the first paragraph of Article 297 of the Civil and Commercial Procedures Law, expanding the scope of judges authorized to issue travel bans, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The amendment aims to expedite the handling of applications and improve the efficiency of the judicial process. Published in the official gazette "Kuwait al-Yaum," the decree replaces the phrase "from among its judges" with "from among the court's deputies." This change allows the General Assembly of the Court of First Instance to delegate the authority to issue travel bans to any judge it selects, rather than limiting it to court deputies.

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Judicial reform targets delays

Kuwait reshapes bankruptcy cases

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Decree-Law No. 69/2026 was issued amending some provisions of Bankruptcy Law No. 71/2020, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This amendment aims to raise the efficiency of judicial work and grant the Bankruptcy Court and the Bankruptcy Department more flexibility in forming their circuits, thereby, expediting the resolution of related disputes and applications.

The decree, which was published in the official gazette, "Kuwait Al-Yaum", stipulates the revision of Article Four and First Paragraph of Article Seven of the law. It mandates the establishment of the Bankruptcy Court within the First Instance Court, consisting of one or

more circuits, the location of which will be determined by a decision of the Minister of Justice upon the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council. Each circuit shall consist of three judges, with the head of the circuit holding a rank not lower than that of a court deputy, selected by the general assembly of the court. They will be assisted by a sufficient number of auditors registered with the competent authority.

The amended law also stipulates the establishment of a Bankruptcy Department in the First Instance Court, headed by a judge whose rank is not lower than that of a court deputy, with a sufficient number of judges from the First

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Ministry watches the clock

Time's up for lax attendance

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Ministry of Social Affairs has called on its employees in all sectors and departments to adhere to official working hours and comply with administrative regulations and procedures.

The ministry explained that teams have been formed and tasked with monitoring employees' adherence to working hours. These teams will prepare reports to be submitted to the Minister of Social Affairs for necessary action.

The ministry emphasized the directives issued by Minister of Social Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, not-

ing that this step aims to enhance employee discipline and ensure the smooth running of work in all sectors of the ministry.

It affirmed that attendance and departure will be recorded according to established procedures through the approved fingerprint system, which is the sole official method.

Employees are required to comply with all decisions and instructions regulating work and to refrain from neglecting their job duties under any circumstances. Any violation of this circular or the laws regulating official working hours will subject the violator to legal accountability and the prescribed administrative and disciplinary measures.

Kuwait sets August oil output at 2.66mn bpd

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): Minister of Oil Tareq Al-Roumi af-



Al-Roumi

firmed on Sunday the increase for the seven countries involved in the voluntary production cut exit agreement will be 188,000 barrels per day for August 2026, with Kuwait's production for August 2026 set at 2.66 million barrels per day. The agreement comes as a continu-

ation of implementing the decision to exit the agreement and increase total production according to the needs of the oil market.

This came in a statement by the minister of oil during his participation in the meeting of the seven countries involved in the voluntary production cut exit agreement, which was held via video conference.

The oil minister confirmed that the meeting is part of ongoing coordination to follow developments in the global oil market and to review supply and demand indicators in a way

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Al-Sabah extended his condolences over the phone on Sunday to his Venezuelan counterpart Yvan Gil Pinto after a pair of deadly earthquakes struck the South American nation, underlining Kuwait's solidarity with Caracas.

Kuwait firmly stands alongside Venezuela after this "painful tragedy," according to a foreign ministry statement, wishing a speedy recovery for all those wounded amid the natural disaster, it added. (KUNA)

— See Also Page 7

CAIRO: A cargo ship came under attack Sunday off the coast of Yemen in the Red Sea, the British military said, the latest maritime attack off the conflict-torn Arab country. (AP)



Citizen Service Center opens at Al Khiran Mall, bringing comprehensive government services under one roof

5 Zain Kuwait celebrates success, resilience, and ambition

8



Prayer Timings
 Fajr 03:19 Asr 15:27
 Sunrise .. 04:54 Maghrib . 18:51
 Zohr 11:53 Isha 20:22

Panel discusses new action plan on Resolution 1325

Kuwait eyes more women in justice, security



Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah



Kuwait's National Committee for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security during the coordination meeting.

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): Kuwait's National Committee for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security held a coordination meeting on Sunday.

The meeting was chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Human Rights Department, with the participation of the Director of the Women's Centre at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Nada Darwazeh.

Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights and Chair of the Committee Ambassador Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Duaij Al-Sabah affirmed Kuwait's continued commitment to empowering women as strategic partners in the

fields of security and justice, in line with the directives of the country's leadership.

She said the meeting aimed to assess progress made, identify challenges and strengthen coordination among national stakeholders to advance implementation of the resolution.

Sheikha Jawaher highlighted several milestones in women's empowerment, including the graduation of the first class of 59 female officers from the Ministry of Defense, the first batch of 33 female specialist officers from the Kuwait Fire Force, and the enrolment of the first three female naval officers at the UK's Royal Naval College.

She also noted the growing number of wom-

en serving in the Public Prosecution and investigations sectors, the achievement of officer Fatima Al-Mutairi as the first Kuwaiti female officer to earn a master's degree in military sciences, the appointment of Awatif Al-Sanad as the first female Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice, and the appointment of the first 27 women as court secretaries.

The meeting reviewed the framework of Kuwait's new national action plan for implementing Resolution 1325.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 calls for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peace and security efforts, including conflict prevention, mediation, peacebuilding and leadership roles.



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince

Amir receives Crown Prince, PM & senior gov't ministers

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace.

His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness later received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

The Amir also received Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, followed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Crown Prince audiences

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace on Sunday.

His Highness the Crown Prince also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Later, His Highness received Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince also received Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.



HH the Amir



Abdulmajid Tebboune

Amir congratulates Algerian Pres. on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Algeria, Abdulmajid Tebboune, on his country's Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Tebboune good health and well-being and more progress and prosperity for Algeria and its people.

Crown Prince congratulates

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations

to the President of Algeria, Abdulmajid Tebboune, on his country's Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished President Tebboune good health and well-being and more progress and prosperity for Algeria and its people.

PM congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Algeria, Abdulmajid Tebboune, on his country's Independence Day.

'Board members first line of defense against graft'

Minister stresses honesty, integrity as new directors take charge

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah called on the members appointed by the ministry to the boards of directors of cooperative societies to carry out their oversight and reform responsibilities with utmost integrity, impartiality and honesty.

Al-Huwailah made the statement during her meeting with the appointed members on Sunday, when they discussed mechanisms for strengthening oversight and improving performance. She asserted that the tasks entrusted to these members are considered a national responsibility and reformative duty to rectify violations and address shortcomings once identified. She affirmed that the funds of cooperative societies belong to the shareholders and preserving these funds is a national duty.

She cited another responsibility related to protecting public funds, state properties and the subsidies provided to cooperative societies. She stressed that the appointed members are the first line of defense for these

funds, and that their role is not limited to attendance, as it extends to oversight, monitoring, documentation, and submitting observations in an accurate and objective manner.

She added that government work always requires continuous review, audit and evaluation, while pointing out several observations in cooperative societies that necessitate raising the level of oversight, operational and financial performance, and applying regulations and decisions firmly and impartially. She underscored the need to document all observations and violations, and report them to the relevant authorities as quickly as possible.

She explained that decisions to dissolve the boards of directors or dismiss some board members are due to the discovery of serious violations, emphasizing that the appointment of replacement board members must be based on a clear reform plan that addresses the shortcomings and prevents the recurrence of violations.

She stated that the reports submitted by the appointed members must be professional, accurate and objective, given the critical decisions that result from them, such as dissolution, dismissal or referral to investigative bodies.

She urged the appointed members to reject

gifts, privileges, pressure, favoritism or attempts to manipulate reports, and to avoid suspicion of seeking personal gain or conflict of interest. She added that the ministry will require these members to sign a pledge of no conflict of interest and full commitment to integrity and transparency standards.

She underscored the need to maintain the confidentiality of information and documents and to refrain from sharing them except within the bounds of the law. She called for respectful treatment of the boards of directors and employees of cooperative societies in face-to-face meetings or through regular communication channels, indicating that courtesy does not conflict with strict oversight. She warned that negligence at work will result in disciplinary or penal action in accordance with the law.

She also stressed the importance of continuous development and familiarity with the legislation, regulations and decisions governing cooperative work, as well as the consolidation of governance and transparency principles, and absolute avoidance of social media or media appearances.

She confirmed that the ministry supports every sincere and courageous employee who speaks the truth and performs his duties honestly, does not wrong anyone, and does not tolerate negligence. She said the interest of Kuwait is a red line, and that the success of the appointed members in performing their oversight and reform roles is also the success of the ministry and cooperative work.



Dr Al-Huwailah

Call for good governance, transparency in charities

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Ministry of Social Affairs has started preparations for the introductory meeting on the compliance system and mechanisms for implementing its regulations in line with its efforts to enhance governance and transparency in charitable organizations.

The Charitable Societies and Foundations Department at the ministry invited representatives of charitable organizations to the introductory meeting, which will be organized by the International Islamic Charitable Organization through Microsoft Teams on Wednesday.

The ministry requested that the organizations nominate their representatives to the meeting.

On the other hand, the ministry also contacted the charitable organizations regarding a letter from the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) about the recognition of entities and individuals contributing to the housing sector.

This is in conjunction with the upcoming meeting of housing ministers in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

The ministry clarified that the nomination criteria stipulate that the charitable contribution must be in the housing sector within the State of Kuwait, and the value of the nominated entity's contribution must not be less than KD800,000. A one-page introductory summary of the contributing entity's activities in the housing sector, such as construction, renovation, rental, furnishing or other related initiatives, must be attached to the nomination letter.

Meanwhile, the ministry informed the charitable organizations about the opening of nominations for the seventh edition of the Zayed Award for Human Fraternity for the year 2027, based on a letter from its Foreign Affairs counterpart. It indicated that the nomination period started on Feb 4 and will end on Oct 1. It invited interested organizations to register through the official website of the award.

Content creator held promoting marijuana

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Officers from the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) in the Criminal Security Sector at the Interior Ministry arrested an individual who posted content on social media promoting marijuana, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The social media content presented marijuana in a positive manner, claiming it is harmless, while promoting misconceptions about its use, which could encourage followers, especially young people, to use it.

The suspect was identified and arrested, as he confessed to posting the content. The necessary legal measures were taken against him and he was referred to the competent authorities.

The ministry affirmed that the suspect violated Decree-Law No. 159/2025 on combating drugs and psychotropic substances and regulating their use and trafficking. Article 51 of the decree-law stipulates that "whoever, through enticement, inducement or seduction or any other means, incites the commission of the crime stated in Article 49 of this decree-law, shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years and a fine not exceeding KD5,000 or either of these penalties."

Kuwait launches cloud cybersecurity program

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA) : Kuwait's national cybersecurity center launched on Sunday a cloud infrastructure program aiming to ratchet up the skills of its cybersecurity workforce, saying that the month-long initiative was an effort to keep pace with evolving technologies.

The comprehensive program entails a training course dealing with "theoretical aspects and practical applications," on cybersecurity technologies, while it tailors to beginner and advanced levels alike, the center said in a statement.

Kuwait's cybersecurity center plans to introduce similar programs in a bid to build an adept and efficient workforce, at a time where cybersecurity challenges have become rampant, added the statement.

Owners can transfer allocated plots of real estate – minister

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdul Latif Al-Mishari has issued Decision No. 19/2026 amending certain provisions of the Housing Welfare Regulations, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decision adds a new article allowing, as an exception, the transfer of residential plots allocated under the development plan in accordance with specific regulations.

Published in the official gazette "Kuwait



Al-Mishari

Al-Youm," the decision introduces Article 52-bis-1 to the Housing Welfare Regulations, granting the relevant committee authority to approve the transfer of plots allocated to individuals under the Public Authority for Housing Welfare's development plan.

According to the decision, any transfer results in the cancellation of the housing application, and a canceled application cannot be reinstated under any circumstances. The same beneficiary is also not permitted to submit a new housing application.

The decision takes effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette, with the relevant authorities tasked with its implementation.

'Not in public place'

Court acquits nuisance drunkard

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Misdemeanor Court acquitted an individual of disturbing people and being drunk in public due to the invalidity of the arrest and search procedures and because he was found in an abnormal condition inside a hotel, which is a closed place, not a public location, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Case files indicate that the hotel's security reported a fight and damage to property inside a villa belonging to the hotel, along with suspicions that the suspects are in an abnormal condition. Police officers arrived at the scene, arrested the suspects, referred them to the po-

lice station, and then to the court.

During the investigation, one of the defendants denied the charges in the presence of his lawyer, Attorney Walid Masoud, who proved the invalidity of his client's arrest and search.

Masoud added that his client's abnormal condition did not justify his arrest, asserting that referring his client to the Criminal Evidence General Department is invalid, because it is a violation of Article 80 of the relevant law, and that the evidence is inadmissible since it is based on invalid arrest procedures.

MoSA organizes training course for elderly from care homes

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Elderly Care Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs, in cooperation with the Kuwaiti Sociologists Association, organized a training course entitled, "Activating the Auditory Skills of the Elderly," as part of its operational plan and the 'Friends

of the Elderly' project, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The training course, which aims to integrate residents of homecare facilities with beneficiaries of mobile care services and develop their communication capabilities, was conducted by Tariq Al-Naham and Safia Fares,

with the participation of a number of elderly.

The course included interactive activities and exercises designed to activate auditory and cognitive skills and develop the participants' sensory and mental abilities.

Present at the event were Chair-

man of the Board of Directors of the Kuwaiti Sociologists Association Abdullah Al-Radwan, Secretary General of the association Khaled Al-Radhan, and Ahmed Al-Enezi, Kholoud Al-Khalidi and Ali Al-Qattan from the Elderly Care Department.

Be prepared to counter Bibi's nefarious designs

"A FEW days ago, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that Israel must rid itself of American aid, claiming it was merely social assistance. I won't discuss that claim further, as there is ample evidence that the Israeli entity could not survive without continuous American military and financial support," columnist Eng. Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"In the same statement, Netanyahu addressed an important regional national security issue, mentioning Egypt and Turkiye.

"This is the fourth time he has spoken about the 'new Sunni axis.' Netanyahu said, 'We must eliminate the new Sunni axis after we have eliminated the Shiite axis.'

"Netanyahu speaks as if he has become the de facto ruler of the Middle East, rather than the head of the Israeli entity, and as if he is the one who decides the models of governance in the countries of the region.

"These statements constitute a new threat to regional security. During his speech at the United Nations in 2023, Netanyahu presented a map of what he called the 'New Middle East,' in which he outlined the borders of 'Greater Israel'.

"The threats made by him are not merely campaign rhetoric ahead of the early elections scheduled for next October. Rather, they reflect a broader strategic vision of an Israel whose geographical borders remain undefined to this day.

"The map of what is called 'Greater Israel,' displayed on the uniforms of Israeli soldiers, reflects the influence of Zionist ideology on Israeli politics and suggests an approach that differs from the framework outlined in the agreements signed by some Arab states.

"Incidentally, the Al-Aqsa uprising began 15 days after Netanyahu's speech at the United Nations. Given what has transpired in Gaza since October 7, 2023, this suggests that the Al-Aqsa uprising disrupted the Israeli plan.

"The genocide carried out by Israel in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon, along with the systematic annexation of the West Bank, indicates that the plan to expand the occupation was close to extending into Gaza and Lebanon.

"A Mossad commander stated that the attack on Lebanon had been planned for October 11, 2023, but that Hamas's attack disrupted those plans. This suggests that Netanyahu is pursuing an agenda that extends beyond the elections.

"According to this statement, the occupation can be expected to expand into Syria.

"Israeli rhetoric towards Egypt and Turkiye, veiled threats against some Gulf states, and media campaigns targeting others all call for vigilance regarding Israel's intentions.

"Kuwait has much to do, as it could, in one way or another, be affected by Israel's ambitions to dominate the region. Although history shows that those who attack Kuwait have met a dire fate, Kuwait should continue to pursue diplomatic and political efforts at all levels.

"Kuwait should be prepared for any eventuality, as Israel has become a wounded wolf that may seek to achieve its objectives at any cost. Kuwait is not alone in this regard. All Arab states, as well as Turkiye, should also be prepared.

"Everyone knows that Israel often operates in the shadows, carrying out bombings and assassinations before denying responsibility. Israel is accustomed to igniting wars through unseen proxies."

Also:

"Let's talk about life's strange laws, starting with the law of queues - If you are standing in a slow queue and move to a faster one, the original queue will suddenly start moving faster than the new one," columnist Ahmad Al-Dawas wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"The telephone law - You never dial the wrong number and get a busy signal.

"The repair law - You will often feel the sudden need to scratch your head the moment your hands are covered in grease or oil.

"The equipment law - If you drop something, it will keep rolling until it reaches the one place you can't retrieve it.

"The coincidence law - If you're with someone you don't want anyone to see you with, you will suddenly run into everyone you know.

"The key law - If you have several similar keys and need to unlock your front door, the right key will always be the last one you try.

"The traffic light law - If you're in a hurry, every traffic light you approach will turn red.

"The law of search - When you desperately need a specific tool, you won't

find it easily, even if it's right in front of you.

"The law of shawarma - If you buy one shawarma sandwich, you won't feel full. If you buy two, you'll be full after the first one.

"If you stop thinking about getting something, it often comes to you on its own.

"When the price of eggs rose in Argentina, people stopped buying them until the price collapsed, and merchants brought it back down to its previous level.

"When the price of tomatoes rose in Saudi Arabia, people stopped buying them, and the price eventually returned to what it was before.

"This isn't limited to food. A man wanted to marry a woman, so he kept calling her, but she ignored his calls every time. When he finally stopped calling, she started reaching out to ask about him, and sometimes the opposite happens too.

"I used to pay for an annual subscription to the British magazine 'The Economist.' When the magazine raised the subscription price to \$430 a year, I was upset and decided not to renew.

"After that, The Economist contacted me and offered a discount, but I didn't respond. Then it offered me a free month, and I still didn't respond.

"I told the magazine I would consider renewing my subscription only if it reduced the price to \$20 a year."

"The strength of nations is not measured only by their natural resources but more importantly by their human capital - people who are capable of building, innovating, and taking responsibility," columnist Mohammad Nasser Al-Aleem wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"Resources may be depleted, and technologies may change, but a skilled, educated population with deeply rooted values is a form of wealth that continually renews itself. It is an investment that never loses its value.

"The experience of developed nations has shown that true progress is not built on oil, factories, or skyscrapers alone. It begins in schools and universities, with strong families, and with educational, healthcare, and cultural systems that nurture people who value knowledge, believe in hard work, and take pride in their homeland.

"Investing in human capital is not a short-term project but a long-term vision whose benefits extend across generations. In a world changing at an unprecedented pace, driven by artificial intelligence and the digital economy, competition among nations increasingly depends on the quality of their people rather than the abundance of their resources.

"The question is no longer, 'What do we possess?' The real question is, 'Whom are we developing?' Are we preparing our children for a future that demands critical thinking, innovation, and the ability to learn continuously?"

"Human development is not limited to education. It also includes instilling values, strengthening national identity, promoting physical and mental well-being, encouraging reading, fostering a spirit of initiative, and providing young people with opportunities to develop their talents and participate in decision-making.

"A citizen who feels that their country believes in their abilities is more likely to respond with loyalty, commitment, and dedication.

"Kuwait possesses promising human capital, with young people achieving success in scientific, professional, athletic, and cultural fields.

"Sustaining this success requires continued investment in quality education, scientific research, entrepreneurship, training, and the empowerment of national talent.

"Sustainable development begins and ends with people. Building roads and constructing buildings is important, but building people is the achievement that gives those projects their purpose and lasting value.

"Nations are not built on concrete alone, but on minds that plan, hearts that are committed, and hands that work with excellence.

"True investment is not in the buildings we construct, but in the knowledge, values, confidence, and sense of responsibility we cultivate in people. Every project can stall, and every economy can face challenges, but skilled people remain capable of rebuilding their nation.

"Perhaps the most valuable belief a country can hold is that its people are not merely beneficiaries of development, but its primary architects, protectors of its achievements, and its greatest hope for the future.

"One truth remains constant - nations that invest in their people do not lose. They strengthen their present, secure their future, and build lasting prosperity on an unshakable foundation."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives the education officials.

From kindergarten to high school ... challenges tackled

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah on Sunday met with Chairman of the Kuwaiti Association for the Development of the Educational System Dr. Saleh Al-Enezi, who was accompanied by association members Fahad Al-Mutairi and Saleh Al-Harbi.

Chairperson of the Development and Initiatives Committee in the Farwaniya Governorate Council Hessa Al-Mutawa also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the Governor was briefed on the project of the association to develop the educational environment,

targeting students from kindergarten to high school, by addressing the challenges that the students are facing and promoting positive values.

The Governor praised the efforts and initiatives of the association to better serve the students, while underscoring the importance of coordination among various parties to support and develop the educational system.

The chairman and members of the association expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the Governor for the warm reception and his full support for community and educational initiatives.

Juvenile, appellate courts streamlined

Competency at stake?

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The official gazette "Kuwait Al-Youm" has published Decree-Law No. 70/2026 amending certain provisions of the Juvenile Law issued by Law No. 111/2015, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decree regulates the formation of the Juvenile Court and the appellate circuit competent to hear appeals, thereby enhancing the flexibility of judicial panels and contributing to the faster resolution of cases.

Article 1 of the decree stipulates the replacement of the text of the first paragraph of Article 33 and the second paragraph of Article 49 of the Juvenile Law.

Under the amendment, a Juvenile Court is established within the Court of First Instance, composed of three judges from the Court of First Instance, assisted by two experts (social workers), at least one of whom must be a woman. Their at-

tendance at court sessions and proceedings is mandatory.

The two experts are required to submit a report to the court on the juvenile's circumstances from various perspectives before the judgment is issued.

The appellate circuit competent to hear appeals will be formed and presided over by a judge whose rank is no lower than that of a court clerk, and includes two other judges as members.

The explanatory memorandum clarified that the existing law's requirement for specific judicial ranks for the presidency and membership of the Juvenile Court and the Appeals Chamber sometimes led to difficulties in completing the formation of the chambers, given the increasing number of cases and the limited number of judges holding certain ranks, particularly that of deputy judge.

The memorandum indicated that the amendment aligns with the national plan to nationalize the judiciary by allowing greater flexibility in the formation of judicial chambers.

'Set installments'

Bank seizure of total salary invalid: court

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Second Circuit of the Appeals overturned the ruling of a lower court and declared invalid a bank's seizure of the whole salary of a citizen employed at the Ministry of Interior, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Appeals Court ordered the bank to set loan installments to a maximum of one quarter of the salary.

Attorney Abdullah Al-Hajri filed the lawsuit on behalf of the citizen, indicating that the bank deducted the whole salary transferred to the account of his client to pay the loan even if his client is covered by Article 50 of the Police Force Law, which prohibits deduction of more than one-quarter of the salaries of police force members, except in cases permitted by law.

The lower court previously ruled that it lacked jurisdiction over the case. Al-Hajri appealed the ruling, asserting that the dispute is about a temporary measure aimed at averting an imminent danger -- his client being deprived of his whole salary.

Security campaign nets 18 criminals in 24 hours

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Intensive security campaigns conducted recently by officers from the General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry in different parts of the country resulted in the arrest of 18 wanted individuals within a 24-hour period.

The arrested individuals were referred to the relevant authorities for legal action.

A security source stated that these arrests are part of the daily campaigns aimed at apprehending individuals wanted by law for committing crimes and those proven to have violated the laws of the country.

The source indicated that the cases of those arrested varied, including outstanding arrest warrants, absconding and expired residency permits.

2,502 citations issued: Traffic campaigns conducted by officers from the General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry within 24 hours resulted in the issuance of 2,502 citations for various traffic violations.

A security source disclosed that these traffic campaigns led to the impoundment of 35 vehicles and the arrest of six individuals for violating the Residency and Labor laws.

Other Voices

The China religions

By Ahmad alsarraf

FOR half a century, I have been reading and hearing about conferences on interfaith or inter-sectarian dialogue. Despite the resources spent on these events, they have produced limited results.

Those who lead, promote, and benefit from religious movements know that their status and the respect they command from their communities are tied to their positions. Hence, relinquishing these positions would mean losing both their resources and that respect.

From this perspective, acknowledging the concept of "religious rapprochement" implicitly means that what they have believed for a thousand or two thousand years was not entirely true, which is unacceptable. Such rapprochement, in its very nature, means destroying the house from within.

These meetings are no different, for example, from meetings between Pepsi and Coca-Cola executives to agree on a merger, or for one company to exit the market in favor of the other, knowing full well that each beverage has its own loyal consumers.

The market can easily accommodate both brands. Why, then, should the shareholders of one company, along with hundreds of thousands of employees, agents, and distributors in hundreds of cities, lose billions of dollars without a convincing reason?

It appears that those who call for such conferences are either benefiting from them or are unaware that human nature has never agreed, and will never agree, on a single religion, just as people differ in their preferences for vehicle colors, cuisine, and clothing styles. History has repeatedly shown that even non-proselytizing or small religions persist, regardless of attempts to eradicate them.

Despite this, religions such as Mandaeism and the Sabians have persisted for thousands of years and are expected to continue to do so. History has not witnessed a people willingly abandoning their faith in its entirety in favor of followers of a hostile or opposing belief system.

Recently, some parties have come to recognize the importance of respecting every human being as a human being, and that differences and diversity within societies can only be managed when the majority respects the minority. Respect is a moral imperative that goes beyond mere tolerance, as tolerance can sometimes conceal a sense of superiority.




China has experienced conflicts with a religious character; however, the number of wars classified as religious has been far fewer than in other parts of the world. This is because, in Chinese history, and to a large extent in Japan, religion was typically linked to the state, morality, and social order, rather than to competition.

Political conflict was mostly centered on dynasty, legitimacy, land, taxation, or ethnic rule, rather than on disputes over correct religious interpretation. Chinese rulers generally accepted religious pluralism under state control. As a result, Confucianism formed the basis of the political system, while Buddhism, Taoism, and later Islam and Christianity were permitted to exist, provided their followers did not challenge the authority of the emperor or the state.

Chinese religions were often not exclusive, as is the case in many monotheistic traditions. People could practice several traditions belonging to more than one religion simultaneously, which diminished the notion of a single true religion requiring constant defense and even death. Consequently, the state treated religion as a matter of public order, not as an ideology to be imposed on everyone.

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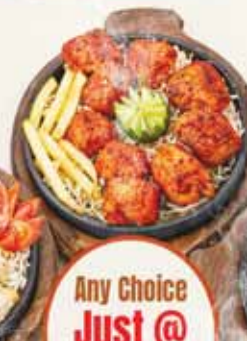
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HH the Amir HH the Crown Prince HH the Prime Minister

Amir congratulates Interim Pres. Venezuela on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 5. (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the Interim President of Venezuela, Delcy Rodriguez, on her country's Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Rodriguez good health and well-being and more progress and prosperity for Venezuela and its people.

Crown Prince congratulates

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the Interim President of Venezuela, Delcy Rodriguez, on her country's Independence Day.

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PM congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the Interim President of Venezuela, Delcy Rodriguez, on her country's Independence Day.

CAPE VERDE

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Cape Verde, Jose Maria Neves, on his country's Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Neves good health and well-being and more progress and prosperity for Cape Verde and its people.

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PM congratulates

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Save power, water drive

Gov. visits Khairan Mall

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Hamoud Al-Jaber visited the 'Waffer' National Campaign for Electricity and Water Rationalization pavilion at Khairan Mall on Saturday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.



Sheikh Hamoud

During the visit, the Governor was briefed on the initiatives and awareness programs implemented by the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to promote the culture of rationalizing electricity and water consumption and instilling sustainability concepts within the community.

He listened to a detailed explanation of the awareness content and interactive displays at the pavilion, as well as the guidelines highlighting the best practices for judicious electricity and water consumption daily. He also learned about modern technologies and solutions for saving electricity and water.

The Governor commended the efforts of the ministry through the campaign, and its role in raising awareness and promoting social responsibility towards the optimal use of electricity and water.

On the other hand, the ministry affirmed that the 'Waffer' pavilion will con-

tinue to offer its awareness and interactive programs and activities, aimed at raising community awareness on the necessity of adopting a conservation policy by reducing consumption and preserving national resources.



CAPT nods MEWRE request: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT), in its meeting on June 29, approved the request of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to offer four tenders to bidders who met the terms and specifications.

The total value of these tenders is KD5.63 million, for the repair of low-voltage underground cables and the extension and splicing of low-voltage cables for new consumers in several governorates.

The tenders include cable repair and extension work in Ahmadi Governorate (South) at a cost of KD1.215 million, Ahmadi Governorate (North) at a cost of KD1.241 million, Jahra Governorate (South) at a cost of KD1.458 million and Farwaniyah Governorate (East) at a cost of KD1.149 million.

As per the decision of CAPT, the four tenders will be referred to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) to complete the pre-audit and review procedures.

Through these tenders, the ministry is committed to meet the demands of citizens wishing to connect electricity to plots and properties in various residential sectors. This will be achieved by extending low-voltage cables and connecting them to secondary substations for transmitting electricity from the main stations to consumers.



Hanan Al-Sultan

KUNA photo

Kuwait backs Lebanon's UPR outcome on rights

GENEVA, July 5, (KUNA): Kuwait reaffirmed its support for the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Lebanon during the 62nd session of the Human Rights Council.

In a statement delivered during the adoption of Lebanon's UPR outcome, member of Kuwait's permanent delegation to the UN, Third Secretary Hanan Al-Sultan welcomed the Lebanese delegation and expressed Kuwait's appreciation for its briefing on the recommendations received.

She commended Lebanon for accepting Kuwait's recommendations on improving education quality, promoting inclusive education, strengthening health-care services, particularly primary healthcare, and expanding access to essential health services for vulnerable groups.

Al-Sultan said Lebanon's acceptance of the recommendations reflected its commitment to advancing the education and health sectors and enhancing economic and social rights.

She conveyed Kuwait's wishes of success in implementing the accepted recommendations and reaffirmed its support for the Human Rights Council's adoption of the country's UPR outcome.

Fiber optic cable extension works

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy has announced the commencement of fiber optic cable extension works between existing main substations, scheduled from July 5 to July 11, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The works will include excavation and backfilling in several areas. The project

will cover Fahad Al-Ahmad, Abu Halifa, Al-Riqqa, Egaila, Funaites, Hadiya, Dhafer, Shuwaikh Industrial Area, Kaifan, Shamiya, Hawally, Rawda, Da'iya, Jabriya, Shaab, Salmiya, Rumaithiya, Salwa, Mishref, Yarmouk, Khaitan, Omariya, Rehab, Rabia, Farwaniya, Dajeej, and Mutlaa, according to the specified sections outlined in the announcement.

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Kuwait University photo

Participants of the workshop.

KU organizes workshop

Strategic planning vital to raise efficiency and output

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Office of the Vice President for Planning at Kuwait University organized a workshop entitled, "Fundamentals of Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement," on June 30, 2026 at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

The concepts of strategic planning and the mechanisms for managing institutional performance to raise work efficiency and improve performance were explained at the workshop.

Present at the workshop were Vice President for Planning Prof. Osama Al-Omair, Assistant Vice President for Strategic Planning Dr. Mishari Al-Nahedh, Head of the Resource Planning and Performance Planning Department in the Strategic Planning Sector Eng. Khuloud Al-Jassem, Assistant Undersecretary for Support Services at the Ministry of Higher Education Saadoun Buarki, and a number of Ministry of Higher Education officials.

Al-Omair confirmed that the university is focusing on strengthening its partnership with state institutions, building national capacities and exchanging expertise. He said the workshop is in line with the commitment of the university to enhance quality, innovation and sustainability, and maintain a distinguished pres-

ence. Al-Nahedh disclosed that strategic planning is the center of the commitment of the university to develop its performance system and realize its mission of becoming a leading source for preparing national talent capable of contributing to the development of the knowledge economy through higher education, scientific research, and effective partnerships in meeting the needs of society.

During the workshop, he conducted a presentation on the role of strategic management in the work environment, based on clear plans and specific objectives for performance improvement.

Al-Jassem talked about the methodology for preparing the executive strategic plan and the process of translating the strategy of the university into reality through certain mechanisms and initiatives, linking it to the budget and performance indicators.

The workshop concluded with interactive exercises presented by Eng. Sarah Al-Harbi from the Planning Sector, which included examples taken from the experience of the university in making the executive plan, with the participation of the Ministry of Higher Education staff.

Summer school clubs open doors

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The General Directorate of Educational Support Services at the Ministry of Education announced that the activities of 27 evening summer school clubs for boys and girls shall resume on Sunday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the ministry disclosed that the program is part of a comprehensive plan for students to spend their free time in various educational activities that provide them with a safe and stimulating environment to develop their intellectual, physical and social abilities.

The ministry stated that the online registration for the summer clubs starts on Sunday through its official website, indicating the students must use their accounts on the Teams platform, or they can register in person at the club. It added that

the registration period will end on Aug 31.

It indicated that activities will be held at 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm from Sunday to Thursday, giving flexibility for students and parents in registering and choosing the programs and activities. The clubs are in 27 locations in different educational districts, in addition to specialized programs for students with special needs.

It revealed that this year's program marks the first time for clubs specializing in scouting activities. These clubs aim to broaden participation in the scouting movement and instill discipline, self-reliance, volunteerism and teamwork among the students.

It said the clubs are for students in public, private, religious and specialized education schools -- from elementary to high school.

High achiever sets sights on medicine

Sarah Al-Qattan scores 99.82% in scientific stream

CONGRATULATIONS to Sarah Nael Abdulhamid Al-Qattan of Dasman Bilingual School 2 on achieving an outstanding 99.82% in the scientific stream. Sarah aspires to study medicine at Kuwait University, driven by a passion for serving her community. She attributes her continued academic excellence to perseverance, discipline and the unwavering support and guidance of her parents, grandparents who provided the ideal environment for her success.

Pictured celebrating her remarkable achievement are Sarah with her father, Dr Nael Abdulhamid Al-Qattan, her mother, Dr Sanaa Al-Bustan and her brother Engineer Abdulhamid Al-Qattan. She dedicates this accomplishment to her beloved homeland, Kuwait, her parents and her teachers at Dasman Bilingual School, grandparents expressing her hope to serve her country under the wise leadership of HH the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Congratulations to Sarah and her family on this outstanding achievement, and best wishes for continued success in the years ahead.



Sarah with her father, Dr Nael Abdulhamid Al-Qattan, her mother, Dr Sanaa Al-Bustan and her brother Engineer Abdulhamid Al-Qattan.

Adaptive policy for midday work ban

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has confirmed its authority to amend the timing or duration of the midday work ban in open areas to align with climatic and environmental conditions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

It clarified that the current work ban remains in ef-

fect from 11:00am to 4:00pm, from June 1 through August 31, and applies to all open-air work sites.

The authority emphasized the importance of employers complying with the ban to reduce the risk of heat stress and protect workers from the health effects of extreme temperatures.

Continued from Page 1

Every ride

6. The driver must possess a valid driver's license suitable for the activity.

7. The driver must obtain a permit from the General Traffic Department to operate the business, and this permit must be renewed annually.

According to Article 4, the General Traffic Department has the right to monitor and supervise electronic applications. If companies or institutions violate the provisions of the Traffic Law, its executive regulations, and the relevant ministerial decrees, and fail to rectify the violation within one month of being notified, the Director General of the General Traffic Department may contact the competent authority to cancel or block the application.

The decision also authorizes the Director General of the General Traffic Department to withdraw the permit granted to a Kuwaiti citizen if they violate the provisions of the Traffic Law, its executive regulations, or the provisions of this decision.

According to Article 5, the provisions of this decision apply to transportation brokerage activities via electronic applications, as well as to all activities subject to the General Traffic Department if they are conducted through electronic applications.

Article 6 of the decision mandates that companies and institutions conducting commercial activities related to the General Traffic Department via electronic applications must comply with its provisions within three months of its effective date.

Articles 7 and 8 of the decision stipulate the cancellation of Ministerial Decision No. 724/2020. The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior is responsible for implementing its provisions, and it will come into effect upon its publication in the official gazette.

Kuwait reshapes

Instance Court as members.

The previous version of the law stated that the department should be headed by a judge with the rank of advisor.

The explanatory memorandum indicated that the amendment was introduced to address difficulties arising from the implementation of the law. It pointed out that limiting the formation of bankruptcy court circuits and the Bankruptcy Department to certain judicial ranks restricted their formation and sometimes led to delays in adjudicating disputes and urgent applications.

The decree took effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette.

New law

The explanatory memorandum states that Article 297 of the Civil and Commercial Procedures Law sets out the conditions and procedures for issuing travel bans against debtors, and previously restricted this authority to the Director of the Execution Department and deputies of the Court of First Instance.

The memorandum stressed that practical experience has shown that limiting this authority to a specific judicial level can lead to delays in adjudicating applications, due to their large number and the need to carefully verify that all conditions for issuing a travel ban are met and that no legal impediments exist.

The explanatory memorandum explained that the amendment was made in light of the Amiri Decree issued on May 10, 2024, which stipulated in its fourth article that laws be issued by decree-laws, thereby granting the General Assembly of the Court

of First Instance greater flexibility in selecting judges authorized to issue travel bans.

The second article of the decree-law states that ministers, each within their respective jurisdiction, are responsible for implementing its provisions, and that it comes into effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette.

Kuwait sets

that supports market stability and enhances the reliability of supplies.

He stated that Kuwait believes in the importance of consultation and coordination among producing countries in facing the rapid changes in energy markets, noting that the ongoing cooperation has helped strengthen the market's ability to handle different challenges in recent times.

He pointed out that the meeting comes as a continuation of implementing the decision to exit the voluntary reduction agreement and increase total production, as part of a gradual and balanced approach according to the needs of the oil market.

Minister Al-Roumi also highlighted the importance of continuing dialogue and coordination to strengthen confidence in global energy markets and maintain their stability in the coming period.

The meeting included an official delegation with the Governor of the State of Kuwait to OPEC, Mr. Mohammad Khidr Al-Shatti, and the national representative of the State of Kuwait to OPEC, Sheikh Abdullah Sabah Salem Al-Hamid Al-Sabah.

It was decided that the next meeting of the seven participating countries will be held on Sunday, August 2, 2026.

KFAED launches

He added: "The State of Kuwait and its people have long been known for their spirit of solidarity and cohesion in times of hardship, and for standing united in the face of challenges that threaten our nation." He noted that these values have become "a source of strength and confidence in Kuwait's ability to overcome all manner of challenges, even in the most difficult circumstances. The generous people of Kuwait were also a source of inspiration for us in launching this initiative, which calls on everyone to give what they can in support of this generous nation."

His Excellency expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, for their constant and continued support of the Kuwait Fund's efforts to uphold Kuwait's standing across the world.

He also extended his deep thanks to His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Prime Minister, and the members of the Council of Ministers for their support of this national initiative, which reflects the State's vision of closer cooperation among its institutions and a deepened sense of partnership and shared responsibility in serving the nation.

For his part, the Acting Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development, Mr. Waleed Shamlan Al-Bahar, affirmed in a similar address the immediate start of the initiative's implementation, noting that the Kuwait Fund is placing the expertise it has accumulated over more than six decades in financing and managing infrastructure projects across 106 countries worldwide fully at the service of the nation, in support of its preparedness to meet challenges and emergency needs.

Kuwait oil production nears pre-crisis levels

Output nears 2 mln barrels per day

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Kuwait is restoring balance to the global energy market at a faster pace than expected, according to reports published by Reuters and Bloomberg citing oil industry sources.

Reuters confirmed that Kuwait was the most affected by the disruption of shipping in the Strait of Hormuz. Nevertheless, the country's crude oil production increased to 1.65 million barrels per day in June, compared to 580,000 barrels per day in May -- almost threefold increase in just one month.

Reuters quoted a reliable source as saying that Kuwait's production continued to rise, reaching about 1.9 million barrels per day in the last 10 days of June, indicating a faster-than-expected recovery in production capacity.

These figures are significant when compared to pre-crisis production levels. Kuwait was pumping around 2.5 million barrels per day before the closure of the Strait. This means that the Kuwaiti oil sector succeeded in restoring a major portion of its production capacity within a short period, despite the ongoing maintenance work and the reactivation of some facilities affected by the conflict.

In another sign of operational recovery, Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) announced on June 18 the lifting of all force majeure notices it imposed during the war. New shipments were put out for export the following day, which Reuters considered an evidence of the sector's return to normal operations and the resumption of adherence to export contracts.

The recovery extends to restoring confidence in the capability of Kuwait to meet its commitments to Asian markets -- the primary destination for its oil exports. This recovery strengthens Kuwait's position within the producer alliance at a time markets are gradually shifting from concerns about supply shortages to monitoring the potential for increased global supply.

Reuters reported that the US-Iran agreement and the gradual reopening of the Strait of Hormuz marked a turning point in global energy markets after more than

three months of disruption.

The war and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz led to a steep rise in crude oil prices, amid growing fears of a prolonged supply shortage.

The US-Iranian agreement resulted in a rapid decline in what is known as the 'geopolitical risk premium'. Estimates from global financial institutions, as reported by Bloomberg, indicated that this increase ranged between \$15 and \$30 per barrel during the peak of the crisis, then declined significantly as confidence returned to the markets.

This was reflected in prices, with Brent crude falling from levels approaching \$120 to \$126 per barrel during the crisis to less than \$74. West Texas Intermediate crude also fell below \$70, as markets grew increasingly convinced that Gulf oil flows would gradually return to normal levels.

Reuters considers Kuwait the clearest indicator of the recovery of the Gulf oil sector, given that it was the most affected by the disruption of shipping in the Strait of Hormuz. Kuwait relies almost entirely on the Strait of Hormuz to export its crude oil to global markets, unlike Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which have alternative export routes.

Analysts believe that the rapid recovery of Kuwaiti production not only reflects a local development, but also an indication that the entire Gulf energy system is beginning to return to normal operations. This trend is further evidenced by the gradual resumption of shipping traffic through the Strait and the repositioning of tankers in Gulf ports in anticipation of increased exports.

Energy companies have restarted production, storage and export facilities, while shipping and insurance companies raised their risk assessments to a more positive level compared to the peak of the crisis.

However, the security situation remains under close scrutiny, as per the LSEG data and Bloomberg reports.

For Kuwait, these developments not only signify a return to previous production levels, but also mark the beginning of a new phase of operational stability. The oil sector proved its ability to recover a huge portion of its activity within a short period, bolstering global market confidence in the sustainability of Kuwaiti and Gulf supplies in the coming period.

CITIZEN SERVICE CENTER OPENS AT AL KHIRAN MALL, BRINGING COMPREHENSIVE GOVERNMENT SERVICES UNDER ONE ROOF



Kuwait - In line with ongoing efforts to enhance accessibility and convenience of government services, the Citizen Service Center has officially opened at Al Khiran Mall, offering a wide range of essential government services in one location. The Center enables visitors to complete their official transactions efficiently while saving time and effort through an integrated service experience.

The official opening ceremony, held on Thursday, 2 July 2026, at Al Khiran Mall, was attended by senior officials and representatives from the participating government entities, led by His Excellency Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, Governor of Al Ahmadi; Major General Abdulwahab Al Wuhaib, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior; Brigadier Fawaz Al Roumi, Assistant Undersecretary for Support Services at the Ministry of Interior; Brigadier Saud Al Tuwaijri, Director General of the General Department of Service Centers; Brigadier Nasser Bu Saleeb, Director General of the General Department of Security Media; Mahmoud Dawood Al Marzouq, Chief Executive Officer of Tamdeen Realestate; Abdulwahab Abdulrazaq Al Mishari,

General Manager - Operations; Azzam Hamza Al Homaidi, General Manager - Security Affairs; and Abdulaziz Salah Al Mutawa, Deputy General Manager - Security Affairs.

The Citizen Service Center at Al Khiran Mall brings together services provided by the General Department of Service Centers - Ministry of Interior, the General Administration of Coast Guard - Maritime Transport Department, the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI), the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, providing visitors with convenient access to a wide range of government services in one location.

The Citizen Service Center at Al Khiran Mall welcomes visitors throughout the week. From Sunday to Thursday, the center operates from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM and from 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM. On Fridays and Saturdays, the center operates during the evening shift from 4:00 PM to 10:00 PM, providing visitors with greater flexibility and convenience when completing their official government transactions.

The opening of the Citizen Service Center at Al Khiran Mall further strengthens the mall's position as a fully integrated destination, bringing together retail, dining, leisure, banking, and essential government services in one convenient location. Visitors can seamlessly complete their official transactions while enjoying everything the destination has to offer.

Dubbed as the Heart of the South, Al Khiran Mall is Kuwait's first hybrid outlet destination, a Project by Tamdeen Group. Spanning a project area of 350,000 sqm with a Gross Leasable Area (GLA) of 88,300 sqm, the destination features 284 retail stores, six anchor tenants, 4,884 parking spaces, and a 900-berth marina. Bringing together premium outlet shopping, retail, dining, leisure, entertainment, banking, and essential services, Al Khiran Mall offers an integrated lifestyle destination designed to serve residents and visitors alike through unique experiences, year-round events, and a vibrant waterfront setting.

INTERNATIONAL

America

Paul Pelosi in hit-and-run in California: The husband of former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was involved in a hit-and-run in California that left a parked car with "major" damage authorities said Saturday, and he could face misdemeanor charges.

Paul Pelosi was driving his brown convertible Friday in Yountville, a town in the heart of wine country, when he struck a legally parked car on the side of the road, briefly stopped and then drove away, the Napa County Sheriff's Office said in a statement. No injuries were reported.

A witness saw the collision and called 911. Shortly afterward sheriff's deputies found Pelosi with damage to the front of his car on a road roughly a quarter of a mile away. He reportedly told officers he knew he hit something but was not sure when or what caused the damage. (AP)

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Fire breaks out on Brooklyn Bridge: A fire broke out on the Brooklyn Bridge in New York during the city's July Fourth fireworks show, spreading flames and setting off a plume of smoke before firefighters extinguished the blaze. No injuries were reported.

Two fire engines were used to put out the blaze, the city's fire department said. Firefighters were seen dousing the flames shortly before 10 p.m. on the bridge, which had been closed to traffic during the show.

A department spokesperson said such fires are not unexpected and are why officials keep crowds at a distance during fireworks.

The show was moved up early because of the threat of severe weather that canceled and delayed other celebrations along the East Coast. That includes



In this image taken from video, a fire breaks out on the Brooklyn Bridge in New York during the city's fireworks celebration on July 4. (AP)

Washington, where storm prompted an evacuation of crowdgoers on the National Mall. (AP)

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Shark attack in NY beach: A swimmer was bitten on the foot in a suspected shark attack Friday at a New York City beach, prompting authorities to temporarily close the beach.

The attack at Jones Beach comes a day after multiple shark sightings were reported at other New York City and Long Island beaches.

The person was swimming at Jones Beach State Park Field 6 when they suffered lacerations on their foot, the New York City Parks Department said.

Lifeguards responded immediately and an ambulance took the victim to a hospital to be treated for non-life-threatening injuries, according to the department.

Swimming was suspended while officials searched for sharks and other dangerous marine life. After an hour of searching, none were found and swimming was allowed to resume, though restricted to wading up to swimmers' waists, the department said. (AP)

Supreme Court tackles history, law in fraught and reflective major rulings

WASHINGTON, July 5, (AP): The Supreme Court just wrapped up a term that yielded significant rulings in cases involving race and discrimination that could have lasting effects on U.S. politics and society.

Justices were at times bitterly divided - and critical of one another - in rulings that winnowed key provisions of a landmark voting rights law, allowed the government to revoke protections for some immigrants and even challenged the historic understanding of birthright citizenship for the children of immigrants.

The decisions come at a moment when long-standing debates over race and identity have turned toward immigration, increasing racial diversity and the fairness of policies meant to prevent and redress discrimination.

"This term, we saw a Supreme Court that is moving quickly to eradicate legal protections in ways that will leave vulnerable communities exposed to the harsh winds of discrimination and hatred that we continue to see across the country today," Kristen Clarke, general counsel for the NAACP and the former head of the Justice Department's civil rights division during the Biden administration, told The Associated Press.



The US Supreme Court is seen on June 30 in Washington. (AP)

Here is a breakdown of the latest decisions involving race and what they may mean going forward:

The court allowed the government to end deportation protections for Haitians and Syrians in the US who have fled violence and natural disaster. President Donald Trump's administration revoked the temporary protected status last year.

With the president's more than a decade-long track record of denigrating developing nations and immigrants who come to the US from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, attorneys for some affected migrants contended that the government could not cancel the designations, in part because Trump's comments about immigrants were racist.

Trump mixes patriotism with partisanship

Severe weather disrupts some America 250th anniversary celebrations

WASHINGTON, July 5, (AP): US President Donald Trump mixed partisan politics with patriotic appeals on Saturday as he commemorated the 250th anniversary of American independence, a moment he declared "one of the most joyous and glorious milestones of all time."

Speaking in Washington after storms prompted a roughly two-hour evacuation of the National Mall, Trump honored veterans, including several from World War II and one of the first Black officers to lead a Special Forces team in combat in Vietnam. They appeared before flags that symbolized some of the most significant and challenging moments in American history, from the one that was draped over Abraham Lincoln's casket to the one that flew on the plane piloted by the Wright Brothers.

Yet Trump also leaned into partisan territory unusual for an Independence Day address, which presidents typically use as a moment to unify the country. Instead, he stumped again for the SAVE America Act, an elections bill that's encountering challenges even from Trump's fellow Republicans in Congress. He highlighted his support for the Second Amendment and revived denun-

ciations of communism, which are becoming an increasingly central part of Trump's message ahead of the November midterms.

The speech capped a holiday that Trump has gone to great lengths to shape to his own tastes. He was introduced by two musical performers who often appear at his trademark rallies, including Lee Greenwood, who performed "God Bless the USA." The event organizers were largely aligned with the White House, supplanting a bipartisan organization that was launched by Congress a decade ago.

"We will always be on top," Trump said. "We will never let our country fall. We will always be the best."

Trump didn't talk about himself as much as he does during his normal rally speeches. Still, he still found time to include a joke about seeking a third presidential term and about World War II's "greatest generation."

"They are the greatest generation," Trump said. "I hate to admit that, but they are."

Anticipation for the milestone holiday has been building for much of the year, serving as an opportunity for Americans to reflect on



People crowd Pennsylvania Avenue after they were evacuated from the National Mall ahead of severe weather at an Independence Day event and fireworks honoring the nation's 250th anniversary on July 4, in Washington. (AP)

their complicated history as onetime colonists of an empire who became a superpower of their own. Organizers of celebrations months in the making had to adjust or cancel activities entirely as much of the East Coast sweltered under heat that approached and in many cases surpassed triple digits.

Severe weather prompted the can-

cellation of celebrations in Hartford, Connecticut, along with Harrisburg and Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Spectators at Boston's fireworks and concert were told to briefly seek shelter before events later resumed. An evacuation was also ordered in Philadelphia. New York and Pittsburgh moved forward with fireworks

but shifted the time to accommodate the shifting weather.

The disruption was particularly acute in Washington, where signs at the Great American State Fair posted an alert shortly after 7 p.m. ET encouraging participants to leave the area. Crowds gathered in museums, subway stations and federal buildings near the Mall. At the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center they waited in chairs and sat on the floor to cool off in the air conditioning.

Crowds were building in the area several hours before the evacuation. Tina Hale, 58, of Cohoes, New York, watched three of her grandchildren children dip their hands into a pool of water near a museum. Hale pointed toward the sky and urged them to look up as three military jets roared above the crowd.

"If that doesn't make you proud to be an American," she said.

David Koshko, 42, and his wife, Jennifer Koshko, of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, came to Washington for a baseball game but planned to stay for the city's fireworks show. After baking in the heat for hours during the Pittsburgh Pirates' win over the Washington Nationals, they took a break in the shade of an over-

pass near the National Mall to plot their next stop.

"Just to be a part of the 250 years (anniversary) is an amazing thing," said David Koshko, a commercial driver and veteran of the Marine Corps reserves.

In Philadelphia, fireworks began to crack as early as midday in the birthplace of the nation near the site where the Declaration of Independence was adopted by delegates to the Second Continental Congress. Hundreds of visitors were gathered at Independence Hall in the sweltering heat to await the celebrations coinciding with the France-Paraguay World Cup knockout game at Philadelphia Stadium, which began with commemorations of the holiday.

"It's one big party in here," Carlos Alban, who traveled to Philadelphia from Chicago to watch the match, said as he arrived at the stadium, adding that he spotted a fan in the parking lot dressed as one of the Founding Fathers.

In New York, tall ships, with their masts, rigging and white sails outlined against a blue sky, made a procession around the Statue of Liberty and up the Hudson River, recalling the fanfare around America's 200th anniversary in 1976.

Trump demands 'loyalty'

NATO chief faces challenge at summit

ANKARA, Turkey, July 5, (AP): Since he started work as NATO secretary-general almost two years ago, Mark Rutte has spent much of his time trying to keep the United States anchored to the world's biggest military alliance, employing outright flattery to dissuade US President Donald Trump from acting on threats to abandon it.

But the goalposts keep shifting, raising the stakes ahead of this week's summit in Turkey.

Initially, it was about money. Trump has long railed against NATO allies for spending too small a fraction of their national budgets on defense. But those problems were addressed at their summit last year, when US allies committed to invest as much as America, in gross domestic product terms.

NATO's real problem now is turning that money into military capabilities, particularly as European countries worry about a possible attack from Russia.

Still, Rutte tried to put to bed any lingering concerns at a White House meeting last month, with a new pitch using a chart labeled the "The Trump Trillion" in gold letters - showing \$1.2 trillion in spending by European allies and Canada since 2017.

But Trump appeared unmoved, saying he was still disappointed at some NATO allies' refusal to join the Iran war, which he had launched alongside Israel without consulting



NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte speaks during a meeting with President Donald Trump in the Oval Office at the White House on June 24 in Washington. (AP)

them. "We don't need their money - we don't need anything," Trump said. "I just want loyalty."

Trump suggested he might have skipped the upcoming summit entirely were it not being hosted by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. It's a sign that even Erdogan and Rutte - foreign leaders Trump seems to hold in rare esteem - will have their work cut out for them in keeping the summit on track.

Historically, the prime tasks of NATO's top civilian official - always

a European, never an American - have been to encourage consensus in an organization that makes its decisions unanimously, and to speak on behalf of all 32 member countries.

But during both of Trump's terms, Rutte and his predecessor at the helm of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, have dedicated a huge amount of energy just to keep the United States inside their alliance.

Trump has threatened to leave NATO, dallied with pulling US troops out of Europe and vowed to take over the island of Greenland - a semiautonomous part of ally Denmark. He has cast doubt over whether he would defend another member not spending enough on their military, eroding trust.

Rutte's approach has been heavy on flattery. Last month's carefully choreographed pitch in the Oval Office - with props redolent of an American flag - laid down a new marker, even for a man heavily criticized for likening Trump to a "daddy."

The charts showed tens of thousands of US jobs were being created and a backlog of \$300 billion in European orders for military equipment - all thanks to the "leader of the free world," Rutte said.

He pushed back, gently, on Trump's complaints that NATO did not support the U.S. against Iran, noting that up to 5,000 U.S. planes took off from bases in Europe before an April ceasefire.



Protesters take part in a rally against plans for a luxury construction project linked to U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, in Tirana, Albania, on July 4. (AP)

Albanians take to streets in protest for 35th night in a row

A massive demonstration was held for the 35th night in a row in Albania's capital on Saturday, with protesters calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Edi Rama, the temporary replacement of his government, constitutional reform and an end to corruption.

Media images showed tens of thousands of people marching along Tirana's main boulevard toward Skanderbeg Square. There has been no independent verification of the number of protesters.

The nightly demonstrations began over a luxury coastal resort

development project in a protected natural area linked to US President Donald Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, but have since evolved into broader anti-government and anti-corruption protests. The protesters were chanting "New Albania" and "Edi Rama, resign." (AP)

1 killed in attack on Crimea as Putin, Zelenskyy hold separate Trump calls

MOSCOW, July 5, (AP): One person was killed in a Ukrainian attack on Russian-occupied Crimea, Moscow-installed officials said in the early hours of Sunday, as Russian and Ukrainian leaders held separate calls with US President Donald Trump on ending the war, now in its fifth year.

Two others were injured in the attack on northern Crimea, including one in a serious condition, the Russia-installed regional Gov. Sergei Aksyonov wrote on Telegram. He did not give details of the attack.

In recent weeks Ukraine has stepped up its attacks on key infrastructure targets in Crimea as Kyiv's military seeks to isolate the vital Russian-held peninsula in the latest stage of the war.

The peninsula was seized by force and illegally annexed by Moscow in 2014. Ukraine's increasing use of



In this photo provided by Ukraine's 93rd Kholodnyi Yar Separate Mechanized Brigade press service and taken on July 3, local residents flee the frontline city of Druzhkivka, Donetsk region, Ukraine. (AP)

long-range strikes has highlighted its ability to inflict painful damage on Russia and put added pressure on the

Kremlin while Moscow's advances recently have ground to a near halt, Western analysts and officials say.

Europe

Slovak referendum fails: A referendum held in Slovakia on Saturday to decide whether to cancel lifelong payments for populist Prime Minister Robert Fico and other leaders after their terms in office expire failed to produce a valid result due to low turnout.

With the votes from 99.5% of all polling stations counted by the Slovak Statistics Office, turnout was 16.1%, far less than the required 50%.

The Slovaks were also voting on whether to reopen the office of the special prosecutor and the National Criminal Agency, which both dealt with major crime and corruption. (AP)

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Firefighters battle Portugal wildfires: Over 1,300 firefighters are battling Portugal's two largest wild-

fires as the country experiences an intense heatwave, the Portuguese news agency Lusa reported on Sunday.

According to Lusa on its official website, the Vouzela wildfire in northern Portugal, which broke out on Thursday, has burned more than 12,000 hectares, while multiple fire fronts remain active due to high temperatures and strong winds. (KUNA)

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Greece wildfire sparks evacuations: A fast-moving wildfire broke out Saturday evening near the suburbs of Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city, the country's fire service said, and residents of three small suburbs north of the city were told to evacuate.

The fire ignited in a ravine in a mountainous area around 8:30 p.m. and spread quickly to the plains, burning mostly through brush, the Hellenic Fire Service said. While residences were spared, several businesses were damaged, the service said.

Residents of the small settlements of Anthoupoli, Filothei and Galini were notified by text to evacuate. (AP)



Fico

Chinese and Russian navies to hold 'Joint Sea-2026'

Heavy rains kill 5 in China's north while tropical storm hits south, Vietnam

BEIJING, July 5, (Agencies): Heavy rains have left five people dead in northern China while a tropical storm toppled trees and submerged cars in the nation's south, state media reported Sunday.

Two villagers died in a mountain flash flood Saturday evening in the eastern part of China's Inner Mongolia region, the official Xinhua News Agency said. One drowned while herding cattle and the other fell into water while driving a cattle herd away, the report said.

Three other people died the same day in neighboring Liaoning province's Fushun city, about 390 kilometers (240 miles) to the southeast, Xinhua said. It did not provide details on how they died.

A heavy rainstorm battered Fushun for several hours early Saturday with rainfall of up to 32.9 centimeters (13 inches) in one area, according to state media reports. Video posted online showed streets turned into lakes. About 3,600 residents were relocated to safer areas.

In southern China, Tropical Storm Maysak headed north into the Guangxi region on Sunday after making landfall the previous night with winds of 101 kilometers (63 miles) per hour in neighboring Vietnam's Quang Ninh province. It weakened from severe tropical storm to tropical storm strength as it moved inland.

Rivers overflowed in Guangxi's Fangchenggang city, submerging cars up to their roofs, footage on state broadcaster CCTV showed.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, workers clear up a fallen tree along a road in Jiangping town, Dongxing of Fangchenggang, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region on July 4, 2026, after a severe weather system was affecting the area. (Xinhua)

Rescuers used inflatable boats to reach trapped people. Residents described it as the most severe flooding in two decades, according to a China News Service report.

In Vietnam, the storm knocked down trees and ripped metal roofs off buildings in the town of Mong Cai on Saturday evening, Vietnamese state media said. Crews used chainsaws and heavy machinery to clear debris and reopen roads after the winds subsided.

Maysak also uprooted trees in Dongxing, a city that borders Vietnam. The tropical storm dumped rain on China's Hainan island last week before crossing water and making landfall again in Vietnam.

Also:

BEIJING: Chinese and Russian navies will hold the "Joint Sea-2026" naval exercise this month in waters and airspace near the Chinese port city of Qingdao in east China's Shandong Province, China's Ministry of National Defense announced Sunday.

Following the exercise, some forces from both sides will conduct a joint maritime patrol in relevant areas of the Pacific Ocean, the ministry said in a statement.

The ministry said the drill is part of the annual cooperation plan between the two militaries and is aimed at jointly responding to security challenges and safeguarding regional peace and stability.

Brazil's top presidential candidates Lula and Flávio Bolsonaro clash over US tariff proposal

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 5, (AP): Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and his rival Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro clashed over US tariffs this week, as both sought to discourage the Trump administration from following through with its proposal of applying taxes of 25% on Brazilian products despite an extensive US trade surplus.

The two top candidates for October's presidential election traded barbs over their responses, suggesting that they believe how they are perceived as handling the deeply unpopular U.S. tariffs will be a key factor in the vote.

While Sen. Bolsonaro, son of former president Jair Bolsonaro, emphasized that the tariffs would strengthen Lula, Brazil's government rebuked the argument that its trade policies are unreasonable, discriminatory or burdensome to US commerce.

The Trump administration first imposed a 50% tariff on Brazilian imports last July, citing a "witch hunt" against Jair Bolsonaro, who was on trial at the time for attempting a coup despite his 2022 electoral defeat to Lula and was later convicted.

In his letter, US President Donald



Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva walks past flags at G7 summit on June 16, in Evian-les-Bains, France. (AP)

Trump also accused Brazil of unfair trade practices and said he had directed U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer to initiate an investigation, which led the office to charge Brazil with lax anti-corruption enforcement and unfair tariffs, among other things, in June. The U.S. has had a goods trade surplus with Bra-

zil for years. After relations between the two countries appeared to warm following meetings between Lula and Trump last year, the U.S. proposal to impose tariffs in June led to a renewed souring of relations, with Lula warning the US leader against meddling in the country's elections.

The move prompted Lula to again defend Brazil's sovereignty, a discourse that last year struck a chord and gave Lula an unexpected boost of popularity.

Flávio Bolsonaro himself pointed to the impact on public opinion in the document he sent to the office of United States Trade Representative (USTR) on Wednesday.

"Brazilian public polling shows that the incumbent government's electoral position has strengthened during precisely the periods when US tariff pressure has been most salient," he wrote in the document, adding that the proposed tariffs would hand the government a "political victory."

Bolsonaro also said the findings of the USTR investigation can be "re-affirmed in full even as implementation is suspended," suggesting that tariffs be postponed.

Lula called the document "yet another act of treason against the fatherland."

Jair Bolsonaro's other son Eduardo, who lives in Texas, was convicted this year for illegally lobbying the U.S. government to threaten Brazilian officials to stop his father's trial.

N.Korea's Kim observes weapons tests from new naval destroyer

SEOUL, South Korea, July 5, (AP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised tests of a nuclear-capable cruise missile and other weapons aboard a new 5,000-ton destroyer, the Kang Kon, repaired after being damaged in a failed launch ceremony last year, state media said Sunday, in the latest military display marking Kim's push to build a nuclear-armed navy.

The official Korean Central News Agency said Friday's event included test firings of a strategic cruise missile and of the Kang Kon's main gun and automatic cannons, as well as trials of its electronic warfare systems and assessments of its target-detection and information-processing capabilities.

After observing the tests from shore, Kim ordered officials to complete the destroyer's trials and place the vessel in active duty within two months, the state news agency said.

The tests came after North Korea in late June commissioned its first 5,000-ton destroyer, the Choe Hyon, a milestone Kim marked with a lavish ceremony where he declared that the nuclear armament of his navy was



This photo provided by the North Korean government, shows what it says the tests of a destroyer, the Kang Kon's strategic cruise missile at an undisclosed place in North Korea on July 3. (AP)

proceeding as planned. After years of prioritizing ballistic missile development, Kim has increasingly turned his focus to naval capabilities, including the construction of a nuclear-powered submarine. While outlining his five-year military goals at February's Workers' Party congress, Kim also called for intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of underwater launches.



M23 rebels escort government soldiers and police who surrendered to an undisclosed location in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Jan. 30, 2025. (AP)

20 students dead after boat capsizes

UN reports peace deal violations in e.Congo

DAKAR, Senegal, July 5, (AP): All parties in eastern Congo's worsening conflict are violating peace terms and committing abuses, U.N. experts said in a report seen by The Associated Press Thursday.

The Congolese army and the M23 rebel group, along with its Rwandan backers, have failed to implement a December peace agreement initiated by the Trump administration that aimed to end the decades-long conflict, the experts said.

They said that the Congolese army continued to cooperate with a Hutu rebel group, known by its acronym FDLR, which includes fighters who participated in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and escaped to Congo. The government in Kinshasa had promised to cease cooperation as part of the December agreement.

Rwanda has repeatedly sent troops and backed armed groups in eastern Congo, saying it was acting to neutralize Hutu fighters and protect its security. Congo and the U.S. government have accused Rwanda of using the rebels as a pretext to gain access to the region's mineral wealth.

The report said that the Rwandan-backed M23 group, which seized Goma and other eastern cities in a lightning offensive early last year, had not withdrawn as promised but instead has tactically positioned and

still maintains its goals to topple the government in Kinshasa.

It said M23 now controls significant swaths of territory in eastern Congo and is the leading perpetrator of conflict-related sexual violence.

Rwanda exercises significant control over M23, and in late 2025, Rwandan troops in Congo were "conservatively estimated at 8,000 to 10,000 elements in South Kivu and 6,000 to 8,000 in North Kivu, with no evidence of significant withdrawals thereafter," in violation of the peace agreement, according to the panel of experts.

The UN has called the conflict in eastern Congo "one of the most protracted, complex, serious humanitarian crises on Earth."

Last week, Congo said it filed a case against Rwanda at the International Court of Justice, accusing its neighbor of bearing legal responsibility for the violence that has devastated eastern Congo.

The UN experts said that minerals from Rubaya and other mining sites in the Masisi region of eastern Congo continued to be smuggled to Rwanda by M23, which is building a parallel economy in areas it controls. This new economy is dominated by Rwandan-linked companies exporting minerals mined in Congo, it said.

The US last week imposed sanc-

tions on a Rwanda-based gold refinery, describing it as being part of "a network working in coordination" with M23 in eastern Congo. It said the sanctions against Gasabo Gold Refinery were in support of the US and Qatari peace efforts.

Also:

KINSHASA, Congo: A wooden boat transporting students back from state exams sank in central Congo, killing at least 20 people, authorities said. The vessel was traveling in Kasai province when it sank while entering the confluence of the Sankuru and Kasai rivers, according to witnesses.

Deadly boating tragedies are common in the central African country, where late-night travels and overcrowded vessels are often blamed. Poor safety standards and lack of infrastructure in remote parts of the country also contribute to the hundreds killed in boat disasters in recent years.

"There were 80 survivors and 20 bodies," said Francois Kabula, administrator of the Ilebo territory in Kasai province, where the sinking happened Friday.

However, Tshikudi Jean, who witnessed the crash, told The Associated Press that the boat was carrying over 200 people.

Venezuela acting prez defends quake response as death toll rises to 2,954

CARACAS, July 5, (Agencies): The death toll from the two earthquakes that struck Venezuela last week has risen to 2,954, and 16,592 others were injured, National Assembly President Jorge Rodríguez said Saturday.

In a message on his Telegram channel, Rodríguez said 6,462 people had been rescued after the disaster hit the central states of Aragua, Miranda and La Guaira, as well as the western states of Carabobo, Yaracuy and Falcon.

The update said 16,209 people were without housing, while 856 buildings had been damaged and 190 structures had collapsed.

Authorities have also set up 80 temporary camps to assist displaced and affected people.

According to Saturday's update, 29,567 rescuers remain deployed to search for survivors, including 3,281 from abroad.

Since the magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 earthquakes struck on June 24, Venezuela has recorded 942 aftershocks, the statement said. As public criticism mounted over the pace and efficiency of Venezuela's earthquake response, the government of acting President Delcy Rodríguez issued its first public defense of the operation with her 180-day mandate as interim leader expiring on Friday.

Rodríguez, who served as deputy to former President Nicolás Maduro until his January capture by the Trump administration, waited more than an hour after the quakes initially hit before making her first public statement, and held her first news conference on the government



A volunteer helping remove debris from buildings damaged by the earthquakes rests on a damaged car in La Guaira, Venezuela on July 3. (AP)

response late Thursday - eight days after the quakes.

Relief organizations typically scramble to find survivors in the first three days after a natural disaster, as the passing of time exponentially diminishes hope for finding signs of life. But exhausted rescuers were still digging across the hard-hit communities of La Guaira on Friday, encouraged by Thursday's dramatic rescue of a 43-year-old security guard from a collapsed mall basement after nearly eight days under the rubble.

Even with some international teams packing up to go home, Rodríguez late Thursday insisted that the government was not winding down rescue efforts.

"We have not closed the search-

and-rescue phase. We are still in that stage because, according to our overall assessment, there are still active sites where we believe there may be survivors, even if there is only one," she told reporters in a testy news conference, where she pushed back against the criticism of the state's rescue efforts for the first time since the quakes struck.

Rodríguez blamed public outrage over the government's response on what she called "narratives manufactured in propaganda laboratories," claiming that rescue crews deployed immediately with adequate equipment to disaster zones - contrary to widespread complaints by residents that they were left alone to search for their loved ones without official teams or heavy machinery for the first 48 hours.

Mali army says situation fully under control after attacks

BAMAKO, July 5, (Agencies): The Malian Armed Forces said Saturday that attacks against several military positions in the country earlier in the day were repelled and the situation was "fully under control."

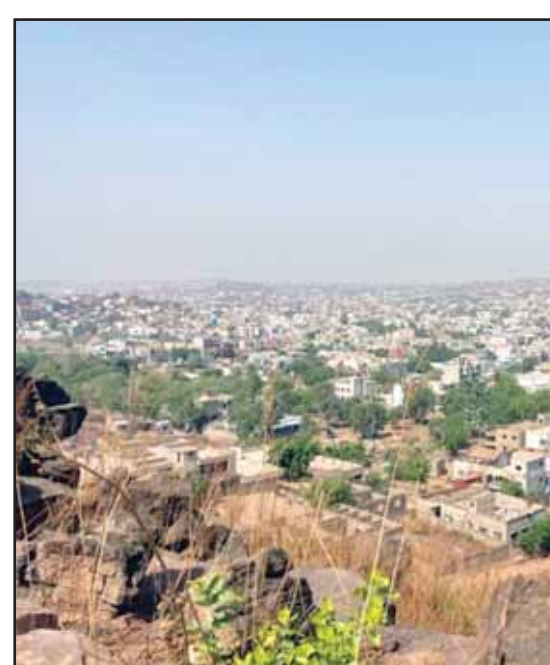
In a statement, the army said the attacked positions were located in Aguelhok, Anefis and Gao in northern Mali, Sevre in the country's central region, as well as Kenioroba, south of the capital Bamako.

According to the statement, 20 terrorists riding motorcycles or traveling in armed vehicles were killed in the town of Sevre. In the city of Gao, one soldier was killed and four others were wounded, while six terrorists were killed and one vehicle was destroyed.

The army said aerial and ground clearing operations were still underway.

Mali has faced a volatile security situation for years, with attacks by armed groups occurring frequently, particularly in the northern and central parts of the country.

In April, the country's Defense Minister Sadio Camara was killed in an attack on his residence in the town of Kati, near Bamako, carried out by armed terrorist groups.



An aerial view of Bamako, Mali on April 25. (AP)

Bursa ends mixed as main market slides

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): Bursa Kuwait ended Sunday's trading session on a mixed note, with the general index edging up by 0.71 points, or 0.01 percent, to close at 8,697.13 points. Trading activity saw 268.4 million shares change hands through 18,433 transactions, with a total value of KD 67.6 mil-

lion (approximately USD 220.4 million). The main market index recorded a notable decline, falling 112.57 points, or 1.26 percent, to settle at 8,843.07 points. The segment witnessed trading of 196.1 million shares via 12,671 transactions, valued at KD 42 million (around USD 136.7 million).

Integrates operations into KNPC

Kuwait closes KIPIC chapter

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: More than two years after the initial merger phases, the final chapter in the history of Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) closed Saturday, coinciding with the permanent closure of its official website, while it started a new chapter in its journey under the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) on July 1.

Sources disclosed that KNPC CEO Wadha Al-Khatib made major organizational changes on Saturday, including the appointment of Musaed Al-Sahli as advisor to the Deputy CEO for Support Services and Sheikhah Al-Tourah as head of the Media Relations Team, as well as the transfer of Munira Shehab to the position of Head of Customer Management at the Head Office and the Main Emergency Operations and Support Center.

Sources said Meshaal Al-Dukhi was appointed Head of Customer Management at Mina Abdullah Refinery, Eid Hussein Al-Azmi as Head of Customer Management at Zour Refinery, Assem Abdulrahman as Head of the Comprehensive Applications Team, Abdulrahman Fahd Hadi was transferred to the position of Head of Safety at Mina Al-Ahmadi Refinery, Fahd Al-Ibrahim was transferred to the position of Head of Safety at Mina Al-Ahmadi Refinery, Sarah Al-Tharban was appointed Head of the Strategic Planning Team, Salem Al-Hajri was appointed Operations Manager at Zour Refinery,

Mohammad Fahad Al-Otaibi was appointed Gas Operations Manager at Zour Refinery, Saleh Nasser Al-Jutailli was appointed Technical Services Manager at Zour Refinery and Nasser Abdul Hamid Al-Attar was appointed Maintenance Manager at Zour Refinery.

Sources confirmed that the contracts for KIPIC employees to work at KNPC were signed two days ago in a calm atmosphere, in preparation for the new phase.

The latest report of KIPIC stated that the total number of employees reached 1,393 in 2025 -- 1,341 Kuwaitis, three Arabs and 49 of other nationalities.

Sources indicated that the initial merger phases implemented in 2024 were instrumental in mitigating the losses of KIPIC.

According to the report, KIPIC undertook significant initiatives to maximize profitability and rationalize expenses as top priorities in its operational and capital plans.

The report revealed that KIPIC exerted tremendous efforts in this area last year, particularly its exports. The company achieved remarkable sulfur reductions and substantial savings in energy and material consumption, in addition to its first shipment of low-sulfur jet fuel (10 parts per million) to South Africa.

The report added that the company exported its first shipment of low-sulfur diesel fuel to the French market, highlighting its ability to meet stringent European environmental standards in line with its commitment to maintain quality and sustainability.

As part of its ongoing support for the 'Diraya' campaign

Gulf Bank offers a package of tips to customers ... before and during travel

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: As part of its ongoing support for the "Diraya" campaign, and "On the occasion of the travel and vacation season, Gulf Bank has provided a set of valuable tips to help travelers manage their finances wisely, protect their banking information, and ensure a comfortable and secure travel experience.

Gulf Bank advised all travelers to update their contact information with the bank to ensure their prompt communication in the event of any unusual activity. The bank also emphasized the importance of activating instant notifications through the mobile application, allowing customers to receive real-time alerts for every transaction made on their accounts or bank cards. This enables them to monitor their spending and verify transactions with ease.

The bank also presented a set of important guidelines that are recommended to be followed before, during, and after travel to ensure a pleasant journey, as follows:

Before You Travel

- Ensure your bank cards are valid throughout your travel period.
- Check your account balance and confirm that your credit limit is sufficient to cover travel expenses.
- Activate SMS and push notifications to receive real-time alerts on all financial transactions. Review every message carefully to confirm the validity of each transaction.
- Download the Gulf Bank App and log in to keep track of your spending and card activity while traveling.
- Confirm you can access online banking services before departure.
- Update antivirus and security software on devices used for online booking.
- Make sure your travel insurance is active and covers your entire trip.
- We recommend storing your valuables in Gulf Bank's secure Safety Deposit Boxes.

Tips While Traveling

- Keep your cards in a secure place and never leave them unattended. Use your hotel's safe to store valuables.
- Store your cards separately and avoid exposing them to direct sunlight or high heat.
- Never share your card information or PIN with anyone. Ensure the card remains visible during any transaction.
- When using ATMs, check for any unusual attachments or signs of tampering. Cover the keypad when entering your PIN, and never accept assistance from strangers.
- Always review receipts carefully before signing or entering your PIN. Do not leave the "tip" or "total" fields blank.
- Check the payment terminal screen (POS) and verify the merchant name and amount before confirming the transaction.
- Regularly monitor your card activity via the app or online banking.
- Activate international roaming or provide the bank with an alternative contact number for quick

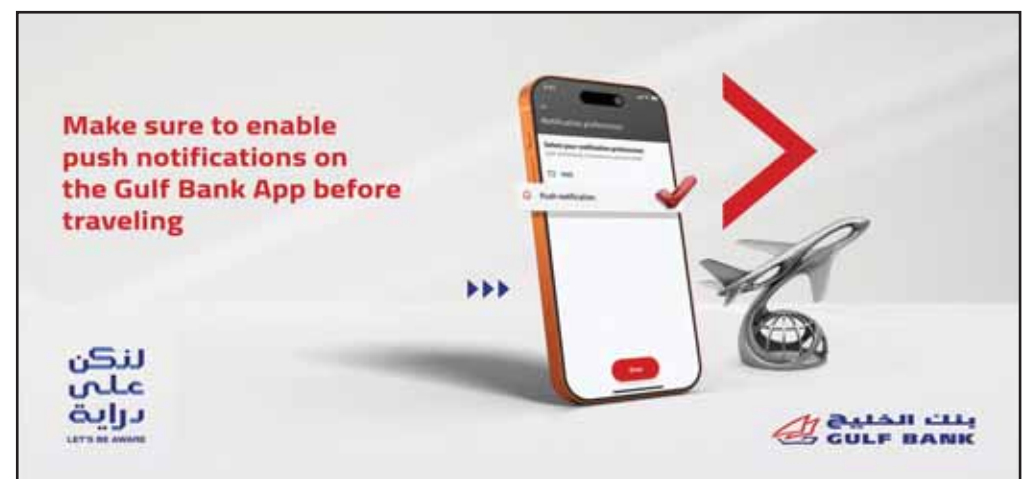
communication in case of emergencies.

- Avoid using public or unsecured Wi-Fi networks. If necessary, use a trusted VPN connection.
- If your card is lost or you suspect fraudulent activity, immediately freeze or temporarily block it through the app. You can also contact our Customer Service.
- Always choose to pay in the local currency to avoid additional currency conversion fees.
- Keep all your receipts and review them upon return to reconcile with your account statement.

After Returning from Travel

- It's advisable to change your card PIN at any Gulf Bank branch or ATM.
- Review your card statement carefully to ensure there are no unauthorized transactions.
- Contact the bank immediately if you notice any discrepancies or suspicious activity.

The bank emphasized that it does not request personal information via email, text messages, or phone calls. It advised customers not to click on any links received from untrusted sources, to update their passwords regularly, and to ensure the use of strong and unique passwords.



Company holds its annual ceremony honoring Kuwait's top high school graduates

Zain Kuwait celebrates success, resilience, and ambition

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Zain Kuwait held its annual ceremony to honor Kuwait's top high school graduates for the 2025-2026 academic year. Organized by the company for more than 18 years, the event reflects Zain's continued commitment to spotlighting promising Kuwaiti talent and supporting national efforts to promote academic excellence.

The ceremony, held at Zain's Shuwaikh HQ, was joined by the representative of H.E. the Minister of Education, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education Dr. Khaled Al-Rushaid, Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs at the Ministry of Education Hamad Al-Hamad, and Zain Kuwait's Corporate Relations & Communications Director Hamad Al-Musaibeeh. The event honored top Kuwaiti students from various educational tracks, including the scientific and literary disciplines, religious education, and special education.

During the ceremony, Dr. Khaled Al-Rushaid said: "This distinguished ceremony reflects pride in our outstanding high school students, who have truly proven, through their determination and hard work, that excellence is the fruit of sustained effort, and that success can only be achieved through resolve, perseverance, and belief in one's ability to succeed."

"The excellence we celebrate today is not an individual achievement alone. It is the result of collective efforts between students, families, teachers, and schools. You are all partners in creating this success and deserve our deepest appreciation and gratitude for the support, care, and guidance you have provided."

"I also thank Zain for this national initiative, which reflects the company's social responsibility and firm belief in investing in people, supporting promising national talents, and strengthening a culture of excellence and innovation among Kuwait's youth."

"This event stands as an admirable model of effective community partnership between the public and private sectors. It also contributes to supporting national efforts aimed at building a generation capable of leading the future and achieving sustainable development."

"The Ministry of Education, led by H.E. the Minister Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, also reaffirms its continued commitment to providing an educational environment that supports creativity and excellence. This is achieved through curriculum development, enhancing teachers' capabilities, providing educational programs, strengthening the values system, and nurturing gifted and outstanding students, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to develop their abilities and achieve their ambitions in a stimulating, safe, and fair learning environment."

Addressing the students, he con-



Dr. Khaled Al-Rushaid and Hamad Al-Musaibeeh with the outstanding students.



Honoring an outstanding student.



Recognizing an outstanding student.



From Dr. Al-Rushaid's speech.



Hamad Al-Musaibeeh speaking at the event.

■ Dr. Khaled Al-Rushaid: "Zain's initiative reflects its firm belief in investing in people and nurturing a culture of excellence and innovation"

■ Hamad Al-Musaibeeh: "The graduates proved that when ambition meets hard work, it creates a story worthy of pride, even in the most difficult circumstances"

■ Zain recognized top Kuwaiti students across scientific, literary, religious, and special education tracks

cluded: "What you have achieved today is only the beginning of a journey filled with opportunities and accomplishments. Preserve your passion for knowledge, let this recognition motivate you to continue excelling and creating, and be ambassadors of your country in the fields of science and knowledge, and a source of pride for Kuwait in every arena."

At the event, Hamad Al-Musaibeeh said: "This is an occasion we deeply value at Zain, as it brings us together with a remarkable group of our nation's best who have proven that when ambition meets hard work, it creates a success story worthy of pride and celebration, even in the most difficult circumstances."

He addressed the students by saying: "This year, Kuwait and the region experienced exceptional circumstances, and we all lived through a period marked by stress and uncertainty. It was only natural for the learning journey to become more demanding. Yet, you persevered and did not allow circumstances to weaken your determination, nor did you allow pressure to become a reason to step back. Instead, you turned pressure into motivation, challenges into achievements, and what may have once seemed difficult, or almost impossible, into a reality."

"Today, you are not closing a page, you are opening a new chapter. You are moving from school to university, from structured learning to wider spaces of choice, experience, and self-discovery. Your generation lives at the heart of the digital era, at a time when AI is changing everything around us, and access to knowledge now takes only a few seconds."

"But with these opportunities comes greater responsibility. Excellence in the next stage will not belong to those who rely on technology the most, but to those who use it wisely. The future will belong to those who make AI a partner in learning, not a replacement for the mind, and to those who use innovation to serve themselves, their communities, and their country."

He concluded by saying: "As you begin your university journey, my advice to you is not to fear changing direction, trying something new, or even making mistakes. University is not only a place to earn a degree, but also a space to discover your abilities, build your character, form meaningful relationships, and learn invaluable life skills."

This annual initiative reflects Zain's continued commitment to supporting education and empowering youth as key pillars in shaping Kuwait's future. Through its ongoing collaboration with the Ministry of Education and various academic institutions, Zain continues to support national efforts to prepare a creative, capable generation that can keep pace with digital transformation, drive development, and contribute to a brighter future for Kuwait.

Strong engagement demonstrates the program's ability to support clients' housing aspirations

Strong demand for 'NBK Al Manzel' program reinforces its position as Kuwait's leading housing finance solution

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The "NBK Al Manzel" program has witnessed strong demand from customers since its launch, reaffirming its position as one of the leading housing finance solutions in the local market. This success is driven by its flexible, end-to-end offerings and strategic collaboration with a select network of leading companies across design, construction, furnishing, and comprehensive home solutions.

This strong customer engagement reflects the program's ability to address a wide range of evolving needs, whether for clients planning to build new homes, renovate or upgrade existing properties, or redesign and furnish their living spaces, within a seamless and well-structured experience.

"NBK Al Manzel" stands as the largest and most comprehensive specialized housing finance program in Kuwait, offering fully integrated solutions for home construction, renovation, and refurbishment. It has been carefully designed based on a deep understanding of customer needs and the complexities of housing-related decisions, delivering financial flexibility, streamlined processes, and practical support across every stage of the journey.

The program extends beyond traditional lending, offering a fully integrated ecosystem of solutions and support services that accompany customers from initial planning through to project completion, enhancing the overall experience while instilling greater confidence and peace of mind.

Flexible Financing Solutions with Competitive Advantages



Abdulrahman Al-Terkait

- Flexible, end-to-end solutions delivered in collaboration with over 60 partners across design, construction, furniture, and home solutions
- **Al-Terkait:** "NBK Al Manzel" delivers a fully integrated experience, from concept to the realization of a lifetime home ownership dream
- NBK remains committed to being a trusted partner to its customers at every stage of their housing journey



The program offers personal loans of up to KWD 95,000 to meet a wide range of housing finance needs, whether for construction, renovation, or home furnishing, supported by a suite of competitive features that have contributed to its strong customer uptake, including:

- Flexible repayment tenors aligned with customers' income profiles
- Grace period of up to 12 months
- Fast and streamlined processing
- Exclusive offers and privileges in collaboration with

the program's partners

Extensive Partner Network

"NBK Al Manzel" is distinguished by its collaboration with more than 60 strategic partners across design, construction, furniture, and home solutions, providing customers with a wide range of reliable options that facilitate the efficient and high-quality execution of their housing projects.

In this context, Abdulrahman Al-Terkait, Vice President – Head of Mortgages at National Bank of Kuwait, said:

"The strong demand witnessed by the 'NBK Al Manzel' program since its launch reaffirms the success of our vision to deliver flexible and well-structured housing finance solutions, supported by a high-quality network of partners that meets our customers' needs and simplifies their homebuilding and renovation journey."

"At NBK, we believe that owning a dream home goes beyond a financial decision, it is a defining milestone that reflects an individual's lifestyle and future aspirations. With this in mind, we have designed a program that delivers a fully integrated experience, from the initial concept to the realization of a lifetime homeownership goal," he added.

Al-Terkait emphasized that NBK aims to be a trusted partner to its customers at every stage of their housing journey, offering a holistic experience that combines financing with comprehensive support, reflecting the Bank's commitment to enhancing customers' quality of life and delivering value beyond traditional lending.

The "NBK Al Manzel" program is integral to NBK's strategy to strengthen its position as a leading financial institution, placing customers at the core of its priorities while advancing innovative, lifestyle-driven banking solutions that deliver greater flexibility and a more seamless customer experience.

The program represents an advanced model of integrated banking solutions, combining smart financing, end-to-end services, and strategic partnerships to transform the homebuilding or renovation journey into a seamless, efficient, and high-value experience.

US hiring falls in June

America in focus: consumers still 'gloomy' about economy

The economy, inflation and how those forces could impact the lives of Americans were front and center over the past week. Trips to the grocery store or gas station are more painful than they were last year, and rising costs are impacting the decisions of both households and businesses.

Here's a snapshot of prominent economic data and news that occurred over the past week and what it potentially means for you.

Americans' attitudes toward the economy improved slightly this month as gas prices declined, but their outlook is still mostly negative by historical standards.

The Conference Board said Tuesday that its consumer confidence index rose 0.6 point to 91.2 in June, a figure that is still below its year-ago reading of 95.2. Consumer attitudes worsened after the Iran war caused oil and gas prices to spike, accelerating inflation and causing Americans' inflation-adjusted incomes to decline. Before the pandemic, the index regularly topped 120.

The report suggests that consumer confidence is recovering only slowly from the hit caused by the Iran war.

U.S. employers pulled back on hiring last month and added only 57,000 jobs, less than half the previous month's total and a sign companies still have a cautious economic outlook.

The Labor Department said Thursday that the unemployment rate declined to a low 4.2% from 4.3% in May, though the decline mostly occurred because many people out of work gave up looking and were no longer counted as unemployed.

The figures suggest companies remain wary of the economy's health, with inflation at a three-year high and consumer confidence near post-pandemic lows. The solid job gains that were initially reported in April and May were also revised lower.

U.S. applications for jobless aid inched down last week as layoffs remain at historically healthy levels.

The number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits in the week ending June

27 fell by 1,000 to 215,000, the Labor Department reported Thursday. That's fewer than the 225,000 new applications forecast by analysts surveyed by the data firm FactSet.

Weekly filings for unemployment benefits are considered representative of U.S. layoffs and are close to a real-time indicator of the health of the job market.

The four-week moving average of jobless claims, which quiets some of the week-to-week noise, fell by 2,500 to 222,000.

The average long-term U.S. mortgage rate fell this week to its lowest level since mid-May, easing borrowing costs for prospective homebuyers.

The benchmark 30-year fixed rate mortgage rate fell to 6.43% from 6.49% last week, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday. One year ago, the average rate was 6.67%.

The average rate has been mostly hovering around 6.5% in the months since the war between the U.S. and Iran began in late February, disrupting the flow of crude oil from the Persian Gulf to customers worldwide. That's sent oil prices sharply higher, helping drive up inflation, bond yields and mortgage rates.

U.S. job openings stayed at a surprisingly strong 7.6 million in May as the American labor market remains resilient in the face of the economic shock from the Iran war.

Forecasters had expected employers to post just 7 million openings in May.

The job market is sturdy but not exactly booming. Layoffs rose in May, and the number of people quitting their jobs – a sign of confidence in their prospects – ticked up only slightly. That's according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics released Tuesday.

Employers are advertising openings, but they aren't actually doing much hiring. Gross hiring – before counting people who lost or quit their jobs – dipped to 5.17 million in May from 5.26 million in April. When the job market was booming from mid-2021 to mid-2023 after COVID-19 lockdowns, gross monthly hiring regularly topped 6 million. (AP)



A job seeker waits to talk to a recruiter at a job fair Aug. 28, 2025, in Sunrise, Fla. (AP)

Soft data, strong markets, and fragile calm

By National Bank of Kuwait

The week closing before the July 4 holiday compressed significant macro information into three trading sessions and delivered a clear narrative shift: the worst of the oil shock appears to be in the rear-view mirror, but the inflationary legacy it has left behind is keeping central banks on high alert and fundamentally reshaping the rate outlook for the rest of 2026. In equities, the S&P 500 wrapped a blockbuster quarter, up 14% for Q2 and the Nasdaq up 20%, the best quarterly performance for both since Q2 2020, before retreating in the shortened week as Thursday's soft NFP print of just 57,000 jobs (half the consensus) was interpreted as a signal of genuine labor market cooling rather than a catalyst for optimism. The week's equity direction was therefore counterintuitive: a bad jobs number helped stocks on Friday as it dialed back Fed hike probability to around 50% for September, while mid-week selling had been driven by tech profit-taking and residual ceasefire anxiety. The quarter's gains have been almost entirely an AI story, the SpaceX IPO at \$1.77 trillion briefly added speculative froth before losing a third of its value in two weeks, and the "bubble" debate intensified, but earnings from the Magnificent Seven continued to provide fundamental underpinning. In commodities, Brent crude completed its worst quarter since Q1 2020, down approximately 38% from Q1's 94% surge, settling back near \$72-73, essentially at pre-war levels, as Strait of Hormuz flows recovered toward 75% of pre-war capacity. Weekend exchanges of fire between the US and Iran tested the June 17 interim accord, and Doha talks produced only technical-level dialogue, but the market's baseline assumption has clearly shifted from "prolonged closure" to "fragile but functional reopening." In FX, the dollar held near its strongest levels in over a year, with the DXY settling around 100.85 as the week closed, and with USD/JPY trading near 161 despite remarks from Japanese authorities on their readiness to intervene when needed, as the structural rate differential continues to overwhelm authorities' defense of the currency. Gold suffered its worst quarter since 2013 on the firm dollar and rising real yield expectations, trading below \$4,200 for much of the week before recovering slightly to \$4,174 on Friday as the soft jobs data eased hike expectations. The ECB Flash CPI surprise to the downside at 2.8% and Governor Bailey's explicit warning of further UK inflation from the energy cap mechanism at Sintra captured the central bank paradox of this moment, the same oil price decline that is reducing headline inflation is also suggesting the worst economic damage has passed, creating space for diverging central bank reactions. The week closed with markets heading into the US holiday half-convinced that the macro peak stress of 2026 is behind them, and half-convinced the ceasefire could still unravel in the upcoming days.

North America

US Factory Activity Cools as Input Costs Ease

The ISM Manufacturing PMI eased to 53.3 in June, slightly below the 53.8 consensus, marking a sixth consecutive month of expansion but signaling a clear deceleration from May's four-year high. The moderation reflects the fading of the front-loading effect that had inflated prior months' readings as firms' built inventories ahead of feared supply disruptions; with Strait of Hormuz flows recovering, that urgency has diminished. New orders fell to 56.0 from 56.8, exports contracted, and order backlogs decreased after rising in May. Employment improved to 49.7 from 48.6, suggesting marginal labor market stabilization in the sector. The headline story, however, was the 9.1-point collapse in the Prices Paid index to 73.0, the largest single-month decline since July 2022, as falling oil prices directly reduced energy and fuel input costs. With 15 of 18 industries still reporting higher costs, prices remain structurally elevated above pre-war levels, but the direction of travel is now meaningfully downward.

For the Fed, the combination of easing activity and decelerating input costs is a modest positive, but with prices still running far above the 50 mark, the inflation signal remains hawkish in absolute terms.

Weak Jobs Print Softens Fed Hike Pressure

June Non-Farm Payrolls disappointed significantly, adding just 57,000 jobs, half the 114,000 consensus and the weakest print in four months. Professional and business services, social assistance, and healthcare continued to trend up, but leisure and hospitality declined, reversing part of the prior month's contribution. The unemployment rate fell a tick to 4.2%, a 14-month low, but this was driven by a 0.3 percentage point decline in the participation rate to 61.5%, meaning workers leaving the labor force rather than genuine job creation. The labor force participation decline is a warning sign: it typically signals workers be-

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1385	1.1361	1.1472	1.1435	1.1385	1.1530	1.1459
GBP	1.3200	1.3182	1.3384	1.3351	1.3300	1.3460	1.3352
JPY	161.71	160.51	162.83	161.37	160.00	161.65	160.19
CHF	0.8071	0.8008	0.8119	0.8033	0.7910	0.8100	0.7953

coming discouraged, which is consistent with the sustained energy cost squeeze on consumer spending power. Average hourly earnings rose 0.3% month-on-month and 3.5% year-on-year, slightly above the prior 3.4%, suggesting wages are not yet disinflating enough to give the Fed comfort. ADP had pre-signaled some softening at 98,000 private hires, and the official print confirmed the labor market is cooling from the exceptional pace seen in Q1. For the Fed, the miss removes some of the urgency around a September hike but does not eliminate it, one soft month against a backdrop of 4.1% PCE and a hawkish new Chair is not enough to shift the committee's direction.

The Greenback was last seen trading at 100.857. Canada Rebounds as Energy and Industry Lift Growth

Canada's economy rebounded strongly in April, posting 0.5% month-on-month GDP growth, the largest monthly expansion in nine months and above the 0.4% consensus, reversing the mild contraction seen in March. Growth was driven primarily by the mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction sectors, benefiting from the elevated energy price environment, along with manufacturing and the public sector. An advance estimate for May suggests a further 0.1% expansion, led by finance, insurance, and real estate, putting Q2 on track to grow above 2% annualized, overshooting the Bank of Canada's 1.5% forecast for the quarter. The data allays concerns that a tariff-led slowdown was becoming entrenched and provides the BoC with less urgency to ease policy, even as inflation remains above target. For CAD, the beat is constructive at the margin, though the currency remains predominantly driven by oil price direction and the USD/CAD rate differential, which continues to favor the dollar given the divergent monetary policy trajectories.

The USD/CAD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.4198.

Europe

Eurozone Inflation Falls, Reducing ECB Hike Pressure

Eurozone headline inflation fell more sharply than expected in June, dropping to 2.8% year-on-year, below the 3.0% forecast and down from May's 3.2%. The deceleration was broad-based, with energy, food, and services all contributing to the softening as the dramatic fall in oil prices from the war's peak flowed through into petrol prices, heating costs, and transport services across the bloc. Core inflation also declined and services inflation eased to 3.2% from 3.5%, an encouraging sign that second-round effects from the energy shock have remained contained for now. Consumer inflation expectations over the 12-month horizon fell sharply from 4.0% to 3.5% according to ECB survey data, further reinforcing the disinflation narrative. The read-across for the ECB is meaningful: having hiked 25bps in June to 2.25%, policymakers indicated no commitment to further action, and this CPI print, combined with ECB President Lagarde's dovish Sintra address describing the shock as "significant but non-permanent", significantly reduced market pricing for a follow-up hike. EUR/USD initially fell below 1.14 on the dovish signals before stabilizing, reflecting the tension between an easing inflation story and the dollar's persistent strength.

The EUR/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.1435.

Swiss Inflation Undershoots as Energy Relief Deepens

Swiss CPI for June came in at 0.6% year-on-year, well below the consensus estimate of approximately 0.9% and reflecting the significant relief that lower oil prices have delivered to Switzerland's already low inflation environment. The monthly increase of 0.2% was driven by housing rentals and the hotel sector, with energy prices providing a downside offset as petrol and heating oil fell in response to the oil price correction. Switzerland's structural insulation from energy inflation, through its large hydro and nuclear power base, CHF strength limiting import price transmission, and restrained domestic wage growth, has kept the country as an outlier in a global inflation landscape that remains elevated everywhere else. For the Swiss National Bank, which held rates in June as expected, the benign print provides no pressure to tighten; if anything, any further CHF appreciation

from safe-haven flows would bring deflation risk back onto the agenda. The SNB is expected to remain in a patient hold posture for the remainder of 2026. CHF remains bid as a safe-haven currency, particularly given renewed uncertainty around the Iran ceasefire's durability.

The USD/CHF currency pair was last seen trading at 0.8033.

United Kingdom

Bailey Keeps BoE Cautious as UK Inflation Risks Persist

Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey addressed the ECB Forum at Sintra alongside Fed Chair Warsh, ECB President Lagarde, and BoC Governor Macklem, and separately spoke with CNBC, offering the most direct comments on the UK inflation and rate outlook in weeks. Bailey acknowledged that UK CPI currently stands at 2.8% but explicitly flagged that it is expected to rise further toward approximately 3.2% later in the year, driven by the lagged adjustment mechanism of the UK household energy price cap. He was measured and deliberate in tone, neither committing to further hikes nor ruling them out, consistent with the BoE's current data-dependent stance following its hawkish pivot in March. At Sintra, the panel discussion touched on the collective central banking challenge of supply-shock inflation, with Bailey noting that traditional monetary tools are blunter instruments against externally driven energy shocks than against domestically generated demand inflation. His comments on AI-driven equity valuations drew attention, he noted the "noticeable divergence" between bond yield levels and equity markets and raised the question of whether this could trigger broader financial stability challenges, a rare and noteworthy remark from a G7 central banker. For GBP, Bailey's calibrated message left sterling broadly unchanged on the day, with the pound's trajectory continuing to be shaped by the broader dollar and rate differential dynamics rather than BoE-specific guidance.

The GBP/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.3511.

Asia-Pacific

Japan Nikkei Rises on AI-driven Rally

Japan's Nikkei 225 closed Q2 2026 with a quarterly rise of more than 36%, a record, driven by the AI semiconductor boom, a dramatically weaker yen boosting export earnings, and the broader global risk-on environment as Iran war fears faded. However, the same yen weakness that inflated corporate profits in yen terms is creating a deepening structural problem: USD/JPY touched 162.41 per dollar in late June, its weakest level since 1986, with authorities repeatedly flagging readiness to intervene. Japan's Finance Minister confirmed the government stood ready to act "at any time." The Bank of Japan's 25bp hike to 1.00% has proven insufficient to halt the yen's decline against a backdrop where the Federal Reserve under Warsh is signaling hikes rather than cuts, the rate differential simply overwhelms the intervention toolkit.

The USD/JPY currency pair was last seen trading at 161.37.

Korean Equities Surge on the AI Chip Supercycle

South Korea's KOSPI delivered one of the most extraordinary equity performances of the year, surging nearly 65% in Q2 2026, its best quarterly gain since the post-GFC recovery, driven almost entirely by the AI chip supercycle. Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix, the world's two largest memory chip producers, saw their share prices more than double as HBM4 demand from Nvidia's Vera Rubin platform and broader AI data center buildout consumed all available supply. Despite the extraordinary gains, a notable feature of the rally was that foreign investors were net sellers throughout, approximately \$17.3 billion left Korean equities in the year so far according to BNY, as international funds rebalanced to cap their overweight positions. The KOSPI eased slightly on the final day of the week before ending modestly higher, with the broader market finding support from the soft US jobs print which reduced Fed hike urgency and improved the risk appetite backdrop for Asian emerging markets heading into the second half of 2026.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar
USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30790.

Investing in future talent to advance Kuwait's digital economy

Markaz participates as strategic sponsor of UNICODE 2026 by CODED

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" announced its strategic sponsorship of UNICODE 2026, CODED's flagship coding bootcamp, reaffirming its commitment to investing in national talent and equipping young Kuwaitis with the digital capabilities needed to support the country's future economy. A press conference marking the occasion will be held on 8 July 2026, at Boursa Kuwait.

Markaz's strategic sponsorship of UNICODE, since 2024, reflects the Company's long-term commitment to investing in digital education and youth empowerment as key enablers of Kuwait's future economy. It builds on Markaz's partnership with CODED, which began

in 2019. This collaboration, alongside Boursa Kuwait and Boubyan Bank, reflects a shared commitment to empowering the next generation of Kuwaiti technology professionals and strengthening the talent pipeline needed to support Kuwait's broader Vision 2035 objectives of building a diversified, knowledge-based economy.

Commenting on Markaz's sponsorship of UNICODE, Mr. Ahmed Al-Falah, Managing Director of Investment Banking at Markaz said: "For Markaz, investing in digital talent reflects the same long-term philosophy that underpins its investment approach: creating sustainable value by investing in the capabilities that will



Ahmed Al-Falah

drive future economic growth. As digital transformation reshapes industries, strengthening Kuwait's digital talent base has become increasingly important to fostering innovation, enhancing productivity, and supporting a more diversified and competitive economy. But technology, on its own, is only a tool. Its true value lies in how it is applied to solve real challenges and create opportunities that serve our society. Delivering that kind of impact requires a deep understanding of our country's culture, values, and evolving priorities. Through initiatives such as UNICODE, Markaz continues to support an ecosystem that encourages innovation, entrepreneurship, and knowledge shar-

ing, helping young Kuwaitis translate emerging technologies into solutions that create lasting value for society and the economy."

UNICODE, launched by CODED in 2021, has become one of Kuwait's leading technology education initiatives. Since its inception, the programme has trained more than 750 students and achieved a graduation rate exceeding 80%. The 2026 edition will train 400 university students from July to November, offering project-based learning in software development, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, web development, and financial technology (FinTech), helping participants gain practical experience in technologies shaping the future economy.

Meeting customer expectations & adding value to every transaction

KFH Rewards enriches customer experience with exclusive benefits & growing network of partners

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues to strengthen its leadership in innovative banking solutions through the expansion of its KFH Rewards program. The program delivers a seamless customer experience, turning daily card spending into valuable rewards.

The program allows holders of eligible KFH credit cards, Hesabi prepaid cards, and rewards cards to automatically earn reward points on purchases, whether made in Kuwait, abroad, or online. Customers can easily manage and redeem their points through the KFH Rewards mobile app or official website, reflecting the bank's commitment to providing flexible, user-friendly digital services.

Moreover, the program features a simple, motivating system where points calculation begins at just one Kuwaiti Dinar, offering up to 15 points per dinar spent. This approach boosts everyday transaction value, giving customers greater opportunities to accumulate points within short timeframes. To ensure a swift, seamless experience, points are credited within 48 hours of transaction completion.

With a broad network of over 200 local and international brands across the retail, travel, dining, and entertainment sectors, KFH Rewards offers customers exceptional redemption flexibility. The



Bank continues to expand its partner base to deliver more choices and exclusive offers that meet customer expectations.

The program also offers diverse redemption options. Customers can use points for direct purchases or payments via POS terminals at KFH's network of merchant partners. Points can also be redeemed for travel and hotel bookings, car rentals, Oula Fuel Company stations, charitable donations, or transfers to other members. Additionally, points from specific categories can be transferred to other rewards programs, enhancing flexibility to suit various lifestyles.

Divided into Black, Silver, and Green tiers, the program offers exclusive benefits tailored to each card type. This classification ensures customized experience for every customer segment, with higher tiers receiving enhanced privileges, particularly regarding travel and point transfers.

In collaboration with program partners, KFH offers continuous promotions, double points, and exclusive discounts to help customers maximize daily purchases and accelerate points accumulation. This reflects the bank's commitment to enhancing customer experience and providing competitive rewards that elevate its banking services.

KFH Rewards reaffirms the bank's commitment to digital transformation and customer aspirations by turning every financial transaction into a rewarding experience that adds real lifestyle value.

AI shares bounce back

World shares are mixed after Dow Jones hits a new record



Currency traders work near a screen showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI) and the foreign exchange rate between U.S. dollar and South Korean won at the foreign exchange dealing room of the Hana Bank headquarters in Seoul, South Korea, Friday, July 3, 2026. (AP)

BANGKOK, July 5, (AP): World shares were mixed Friday after the Dow Jones Industrial Average set another record, as some key AI related stocks rose while others extended losses.

The future for the S&P 500 gained 0.3% while that for the Dow slipped 0.2%. U.S. markets will be closed Friday for the Independence Day holiday.

In European trading, Germany's DAX rose 0.4% to 25,667.73 and the CAC 40 in Paris edged 0.1% lower, to 8,471.19. Britain's FTSE 100 shed 0.4% to 10,613.55.

In Asia, South Korea's Kospi, which sank nearly 8% on Thursday, gained 5.8% to 8,088.34. Samsung Electronics, the country's biggest company and a major maker of computer chips, gained 8.2%, while its smaller rival SK Hynix jumped 10.9%.

In Tokyo, the Nikkei 225 advanced 1.5% to 69,744.07. Chip-maker Tokyo Electron rose 0.4%, while memory maker Kioxia jumped 9.2%.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng climbed 1.3% to 23,350.03 and the Shanghai Composite index added 0.4% to 4,043.64.

Taiwan's Taiex edged 0.1% higher, while the Sensex in India rose 0.4%.

In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 picked up 1.4% to 8,844.40.

"Asian stocks found some footing after two bruising tech-led sessions, with the Korean market once again showing how quickly a stretched rubber band can snap back when everyone leans the same way," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

On Thursday, most U.S. stocks rose as the Dow snagged another record, gaining 1.1% to 52,900.07.

Drops for computer chip companies and other winners of the artificial-intelligence boom kept indexes

mixed. The S&P 500 finished the day virtually unchanged and edged up by less than 0.1%, even though seven out of every 10 stocks within the index rose. It closed at 7,483.24.

The Nasdaq composite dropped 0.8% to 25,382.67.

Stocks broadly got some help from a report showing U.S. employers added 57,000 jobs to their payrolls last month. That's good for the economy, but it was also short of the 100,000 jobs that economists expected and a slowdown from May's hiring pace.

The weaker-than-expected result could relieve pressure on inflation, which has been accelerating worldwide because of jumps in oil prices caused by the war with Iran. Now that oil prices are back below where they were before the war, if inflation slows in upcoming months, the Federal Reserve may feel less need to raise interest rates several times this year.

Stocks of companies in the crypto industry were also strong after the price of bitcoin rose roughly 2%, a day after dropping near its lowest level since 2024. Robinhood Markets rose 3.8%, and Coinbase Global gained 3.9%. Bitcoin rose 0.9% early Friday.

Selling of computer chip companies' shares has weighed on indexes. They've come under pressure because of worries that their stock prices shot too high in the frenzy around AI and that all the spending on chips and data centers may not yield as much profit and productivity growth as hoped.

Memory maker Micron Technology erased an early gain to drop 5.5%, a day after plunging 10.6%. Nvidia fell 1.4%, and Lam Research sank 10.2%. They were some of the heaviest weights on the S&P 500 because they've grown so huge in size amid AI mania.

Supporting & developing young talents under the guidance of specialists

stc launches summer youth training program

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced the launch of its summer youth training program through youth from stc. The program reflects stc's continued commitment to supporting students by providing practical learning opportunities that contribute to developing their skills, encouraging innovation, and investing in talents and developing them through awareness and entertainment campaigns.

Registration for the summer training program opened during June, with 10 people selected to participate in a comprehensive month-long training experience. Designed to provide participants with practical exposure to the corporate environment, the program combines interactive workshops, field visits, and a variety of educational and team-building activities that enrich participants' learning experience while strengthening their professional and interpersonal skills.

Throughout the summer program, participants will be divided into teams and challenged to develop innovative concepts for a new stc product or service, encouraging creative thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving. At the end of the program, the winning team will receive a special prize, while the winning concept will be evaluated for official implementation by stc, building on the Company's commitment to supporting youth-driven ideas and transforming promising concepts into real life initiatives.

Participants will also benefit from a comprehensive training platform that provides the tools, resources, and guidance needed to gain valuable insights into the telecom and digital solutions sec-



stc Summer Program

■ **AlNowaibet:** This summer training program has been designed to provide participants with an engaging and interactive learning experience

In addition, all participants will receive a one-year Youth plan along with Qitaf loyalty points, enhancing their overall experience throughout the program.

Commenting on the launch of the summer program, Ahmad AlNowaibet, Director of Public Relations and Social Media at stc, said, "At stc, we believe that investing in young talent is an investment in the future. And we will continue to create opportunities that bridge the gap between academic learning and practical experience, equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to thrive in an increasingly digital world."

AlNowaibet added, "This summer training program has been designed to provide participants with an engaging and interactive learning experience that encourages creativity, teamwork, and innovation. We are particularly excited to see students develop solutions that could ultimately contribute to enhancing stc's products and services, reflecting our belief that young people possess the ideas and potential to shape the future of Kuwait's telecom and digital solutions landscape."

The program forms part of stc's broader efforts under its youth from stc program, which aims to cater to the dynamic needs and interests of the youth demographic in Kuwait, through customized bundles that include access to additional benefits and experiences. The 'youth from stc' packages feature exclusive deals and offerings in collaboration with esteemed partners across various sectors.

Through strategic youth-focused programs, stc aims to empower the next generation with opportunities that foster creativity, while empowering national talent and contributing to Kuwait's economy.

tor. The program includes practical exposure to key business areas, including connectivity solutions and digital services, enabling students to better understand the industry's evolving landscape.

China, Sweden agree to strengthen cooperation, uphold multilateralism, safeguard int'l order

STOCKHOLM, July 5, (Xinhua): Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and his Swedish counterpart, Maria Malmer Stenergard, on Saturday agreed to strengthen cooperation, uphold multilateralism, and safeguard the international order based on international laws, following a meeting in Stockholm.

China and Sweden have a long history of exchanges, Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, said in the meeting, noting that since China started reform and opening up, the two countries have long been each other's largest trading partners in Asia and the Nordic region, respectively.

Wang said the valuable experience accumulated through decades of bilateral exchanges is that the two sides should maintain an objective and rational perception of each other, uphold an attitude of mutual respect, seek common ground while properly managing differences, and remain committed to mutual benefit and win-win cooperation.

China-Sweden relations experienced setbacks over the past few years, but since Stenergard visited China last year, bilateral relations have continued to improve and gain momentum, Wang said, stressing that this positive trend should be cherished.

China is ready to work with Sweden to promote the sound and steady development of bilateral relations, Wang said, expressing his hope that Sweden will continue to abide by the one-China principle and consolidate the political foundation of bilateral relations.

Noting that more than 10,000 Swedish companies currently conduct trade with China, Wang said China welcomes Swedish enterprises to further seize the opportunities offered by China's vast market, complete industrial chains and diverse application scenarios.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, holds talks with Swedish Foreign Minister Maria Malmer Stenergard in Stockholm, Sweden, July 4, 2026. (Xinhua)

He also expressed hope that Sweden will provide Chinese enterprises operating in the country with a fair, just and non-discriminatory business environment.

The two sides can make good use of platforms such as the China-Sweden Joint Committee Meeting on Science and Technology Cooperation, strengthen collaboration in

emerging areas, including scientific and technological innovation, green transition and the circular economy, and promote more cultural and people-to-people exchanges, Wang said.

Wang noted that the international situation is undergoing complex and profound changes, with multilateral

mechanisms such as the United Nations facing severe challenges, and the world risks sliding back into the law of the jungle.

Describing China and Sweden as both supporters of multilateralism and beneficiaries of free trade, Wang said China is ready to strengthen cooperation with Sweden to jointly safeguard the international system with the United Nations at its core, uphold the international order based on international laws, and work together to address global challenges such as climate change.

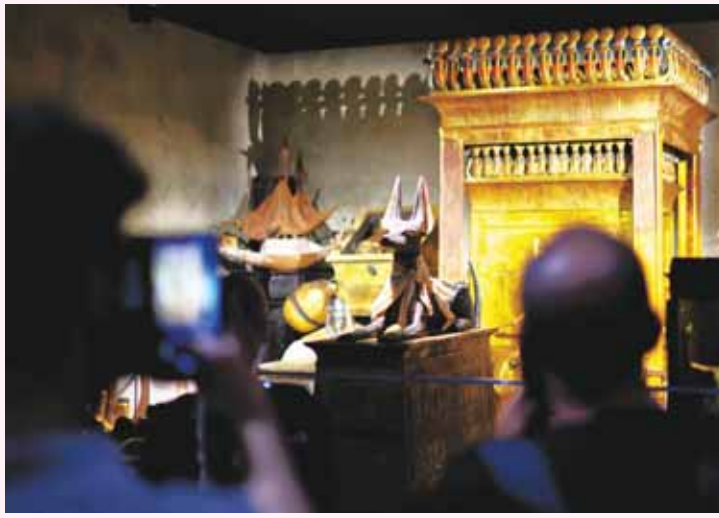
Stenergard said the Swedish government attaches great importance to its relations with China. Sweden-China relations are developing well, with exchanges on the rise and bilateral ties holding enormous potential, she added.

Sweden's adherence to the one-China principle will remain unchanged, Stenergard said, adding that Sweden will strengthen dialogue with China at all levels, make full use of bilateral mechanisms such as the joint committees on economic and trade cooperation and scientific and technological cooperation, and expand collaboration in trade, green transition, ecological and environmental protection, scientific and technological innovation, artificial intelligence and sustainable development.

The Swedish side highly appreciates China's visa-free policy for Swedish citizens and looks forward to expanding academic, educational and personnel exchanges with China to consolidate the public support base for friendship, she said.

Noting that today's world is fraught with instability and uncertainty, Stenergard said Sweden is ready to strengthen communication with China, uphold the principles of international law and multilateral trade rules, and promote world peace, development and prosperity.

The two sides also exchanged views on international and regional issues of common concern.



Exhibits are displayed during the exhibition 'Tutankhamun - His Tomb and His Treasures' in Paris, France, July 4, 2026. The exhibition runs from July 3 to Sept. 6, with more than 1,000 scientifically reconstructed replicas recreating the discovery of the tomb of the ancient Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun. (Xinhua)

From shipwreck to statecraft

Resolute Desk symbol of the American presidency

WASHINGTON, July 5, (AP): Franklin D. Roosevelt toiled over paperwork there during World War II's darkest days. George W. Bush sat behind it to address the nation on 9/11. Beneath it, John F. Kennedy Jr. once crawled and peeked out from behind its front panel while his father worked above, an image so etched into American history that President Joe Biden recreated it with his grandson.

The Resolute Desk is one of the most recognizable pieces of furniture in the White House - and probably in the entire nation. As the president's desk, it's been at the center of American history for nearly 150 years.

That famous front panel has its own story. Many accounts claim it was added during FDR's presidency to conceal his wheelchair and leg braces, but some historians dispute that. They argue Roosevelt used the desk in his private study, away from the public eye, and that the panel itself was not installed until after his death.

The desk's origins extend far beyond the Oval Office. In fact, it's not American; it's British.

The desk is crafted of timbers from the HMS Resolute, a British naval vessel that set off for the Arctic in the early 1850s in search of Sir John Franklin, who disappeared while seeking the Northwest Passage. During that mission, the Resolute became trapped in ice and was abandoned by its crew. Years later, it was discovered drifting through Arctic waters by an American whaling vessel.

The United States repaired it and returned it to Queen Victoria. The vessel resumed service for many years before eventually being retired.

Once decommissioned, Queen Victoria expressed her gratitude to the United States by ordering the timbers of Resolute to be transformed into several pieces of furniture. One of them was a large desk that she presented to President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1880.

The desk spent much of its early White House history out of public view until 1961, when first lady Jacqueline Kennedy moved it into the Oval Office.

Every president since Jimmy Carter has used the Resolute desk in the Oval Office, with the exception of President George H.W. Bush, who instead placed it in the Treaty Room. The desk has also become the place where recent presidents leave a letter

for their successor on Inauguration Day.

The Resolute Desk stands not only as a symbol of the American presidency, but also as a reminder of the enduring friendship between the United States and Britain.

On Wednesday, President Donald Trump visited North Dakota to see the newly built Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library, a massive facility exploring the life of America's 26th president, built in the rugged, lonely landscape where Roosevelt built his conservation values in the 1880s.

During a tour of the 96,000-square-foot library and in a speech afterward, Trump spoke admiringly of Roosevelt and compared himself favorably to the former president, who he described as the embodiment of the American spirit, praising his toughness as a leader and outdoorsman.

"He had a freakin' wild life," Trump told an audience at a Western-themed amphitheater. "He didn't want to be quiet. He wanted to be great."

The official opening of the library on Saturday coincides with July 4th celebrations honoring the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Trump made the trip to see the \$450 million project aboard his new Air Force One, a Boeing 747 given to the United States by Qatar. The visit was a boost for Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, a former governor of North Dakota, while also bringing the nation's birthday festivities to a region synonymous with its westward expansion.

In his speech after the tour, Trump weaved between his own administration's work while returning to lessons drawn from Roosevelt's life, recounting stories of bravery during Roosevelt's time in the West and as president.

"He was something special," Trump said. "He was a really great man. He was a man the likes of which you may never see again."

During the visit, Trump announced that his administration was giving \$750,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support the library's first year.

Roosevelt visited Dakota Territory in 1883 to hunt bison. On Valentine's Day the next year, his mother and wife died hours apart in the same house in New York.

Dakhla Oasis discovery could reboot antiquities boom

Egypt's desert yields a Byzantine secret

CAIRO, July 5, (AP): A well-preserved Byzantine-era residential city in the western desert is one of two major archaeological finds announced by Egypt on Saturday.

The recent discoveries at the Dakhla Oasis and at the Marina el-Alamein archaeological site, near Alexandria, are the latest findings which the Egyptian government hopes will boost the country's vital tourism sector, partially driven by antiquities sightseeing.

Along with the strategic Suez Canal, tourism is a major source of foreign currency in the cash-strapped country.

The Tourism and Antiquities Ministry said that the first discovery reveals details of daily life, urban development and economic activities in the Dakhla Oasis in the fourth century, when Egypt was part of the Byzantine empire.

The unearthed quarters included north-south thoroughfares intersected by east-west streets, forming open squares and public spaces, said Hisham el-Leithy, secretary general of the supreme council of antiquities.

A basilica church dating back to the mid-fourth century stands at the settlement's head, overlooking its main streets, along with remains of two watchtowers to safeguard the outskirts, said Mahmoud Massoud, who chairs the archaeological mission.

The oasis, located in Egypt's western province of New Valley in the western desert, is on UNESCO's Tentative List, a step away from being added to the agency's World Heritage List.

A heavily fortified structure with thick defensive walls, and many houses consisting of reception halls and vaulted roofs were found in the area, Massoud said.

Among them were the house of Tisous, identified as a church deacon and dating to the second half of the fourth century, which archaeologists believe served as a house church before the construction of the city's basilica.

Archaeologists also uncovered bread ovens, kitchens and stone grinding tools that had been apparently used to produce food. Also found were well-preserved bronze coins bearing portraits of Byzantine emperors, Latin inscriptions and Christian symbols, alongside a group of gold coins dating to the reign of Roman em-



In this photo provided Saturday, July 4, 2026, by Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, some of seven surface limestone-built tombs, discovered in the Marina el-Alamein archaeological site, are seen west of the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, Egypt. (AP)



In this photo provided Saturday, July 4, 2026, by Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, a recently discovered artifact is displayed in the Marina el-Alamein archaeological site, west of the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, Egypt. (AP)

peror Constantius II, who ruled between 337 and 361, the ministry statement said.

Diaa Zahran, head of the Islamic, Coptic and Jewish Antiquities department, said they found a collection of about 200 pottery fragments which would have been used as writing material. The fragments, known as ostraca, have inscriptions detailing commercial transactions, correspondence and other details of daily life, Zahran said.

Separately, archaeologists have found 18 ancient tombs in the Marina el-Alamein archaeological site, which is around 100 kilometers (62 miles) west of the Mediterranean city of Alexandria.

The findings included 11 rock-cut tombs, with an average depth of 8 meters, and seven surface limestone-built tombs, the ministry said. That has brought the total tombs found in the site to 48, ministry said.

In the site, archaeologists found pottery vessels, amphorae, lamps, plates, altars and limestone basins, it said.

Mission chief Eman Abdel-Khaliq said they found a 2.5-meter-long granite sarcophagus, with skeleton remains that were currently being studied. Close to the sarcophagus, they found the remains of a plaster sphinx statue, she said.

Abdel-Khaliq said they also found 4 gold pieces placed inside the mouths of some of the deceased - known as "the golden tongue," which had been a practice associated with funerary beliefs of that era.

Marina el-Alamein is an archaeological site close to the city of Alamein in Egypt's Northern Coast. Unearthed in 1986, archaeologists believe that the site was the ancient Greco-Roman port city of Leukaspis on the Mediterranean, which was built in the second century and thrived until the fourth century, the ministry said.

Egypt's tourism has started to recover after years of years of political turmoil and violence following the 2011 uprising, as well as the coronavirus pandemic.

A record 19 million tourists visited Egypt last year, a 21% increase from 2024, according to official figures. The first four months of 2026 saw 6.1 million tourists, compared with 5.7 million during the same period in 2025, the figures showed.

Nanjing, Istanbul bridging history through conservation

ISTANBUL, July 5, (Xinhua): Officials and scholars from China's Nanjing and Türkiye's Istanbul gathered here this week for the "Nanjing-Istanbul Urban Civilization Dialogue" to exchange ideas on heritage conservation and sustainable urban development.

The dialogue was held Thursday and co-organized by China's State Council Information Office and the Chinese Embassy in Ankara, bringing together more than 100 representatives from local governments, international organizations, academia, the publishing industry, literary communities and the media.

Nanjing and Istanbul face remarkably similar urban pressures as rapidly growing metropolises with ancient fortifications and rich cultural heritage, experts said, noting that the two cities' ongoing preservation ef-



A visitor takes a photo of a Chinese porcelain artwork at the 'Nanjing-Istanbul Urban Civilization Dialogue' in Istanbul, Türkiye, July 2, 2026. (Xinhua)

orts provide vital models for ancient cities. Lu Andong, a professor at Nanjing

University's School of Architecture and Urban Planning said the dialogue focused on "how civilization is

passed down and innovated through cities," noting that preserving living heritage -- from Istanbul's Yedikule Bostans to Nanjing's historic neighborhoods -- is just as vital as archaeological engineering.

Participants agreed that while Nanjing and Istanbul have different historical experiences, they face many similar conservation tasks and can benefit from exchanging practical solutions.

Huriye Merve Gedik, head of the City History, Promotion and Tourism Department of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, said the dialogue provided an important platform for the two cities to share their heritage conservation experience.

"Even though we are thousands of kilometers apart, getting to know each other's architecture and history nourishes both sides," Gedik said.



The private study of President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House on the second floor is shown on May 10, 1933. (AP)

Lin highlights homeland links

'Dear You' revives Qiaopi culture, Chaoshan history

BANGKOK, July 5, (Xinhua): The spirit of "qiaopi," the unique cultural heritage portrayed in China's heartfelt hit film "Dear You," lies in patriotism and devotion to family, an overseas Chinese community leader has said.

Drawing on more than seven decades of life memories, Lin Chuqin (also known as Narongsak Putthapornmongkol in Thai), president of the Thai-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, elaborated on the spiritual essence behind "qiaopi" — letters and remittances sent home by overseas Chinese, in a recent interview with Xinhua in Bangkok.

Lin was born in Thailand, where his forebears scraped out a living through manual labor. Despite modest incomes, they would send at least half of their earnings back to their hometown in the Chaoshan (Teochew) region in south China via "qiaopi," Lin said.

"Life was tough back then in our hometown, and making money in Thailand was no easy feat either. After my parents migrated to Thailand, they never stopped sending 'qiaopi' back," he recalled.

Putting family first and longing for the homeland is an innate cultural trait etched in the Chinese blood, as well as a principle upheld by generations of Chaoshan people, Lin said.

"During the Chinese New Year, we children waited eagerly for red envelopes, yet my parents prioritized sending 'qiaopi' first before doing out pocket money," he added.

Lin still keeps photocopies of two "qiaopi," whose originals are now collected by museums in China. Both "qiaopi" were sent by his father to his nephew in Chenghai, Shantou, in the 1990s. One confirmed that money had been sent to cover expenses for a family celebration, while the other urged the family members to avoid disputes with neighbors.

"Tears well up in my eyes every time I look at 'qiaopi,'" Lin said,

adding that they always remind him of his parents' teachings to never forget their roots.

The spiritual essence embodied in "qiaopi" can be summed up with these keywords: patriotism and devotion to family, said Lin, who now passes on this spirit through his own deeds.

"I frequently bring my children back to China, letting them know that the once underdeveloped hometown has transformed completely beyond recognition," he said.

In the years before China and Thailand established diplomatic relations, returning to hometown was a tough journey, requiring transit via Hong Kong, with a one-way trip taking more than 10 hours, Lin recalled. Today, thanks to an extensive transport network connecting the two countries, he is able to travel back to China multiple times annually, witnessing urban and rural China taking on completely new looks.

"In the old days, we would haul bulky luggage full of supplies when returning home. Nowadays, our hometown has prospered, and relatives no longer rely on financial support from overseas. Yet we still cherish every chance to go back for visits," he noted.

Meanwhile, China's rapid development has brought unprecedented dignity and confidence to overseas Chinese, Lin emphasized. "A strong motherland stands as the most solid backing for overseas Chinese."

Lin has high expectations for the upcoming release of "Dear You" in Thailand. In his words, the film faithfully recreates the unique clan culture of Chaoshan and the history of "qiaopi."

Lin said he plans to organize local overseas Chinese to watch the film, hoping to help younger generations understand the patriotism and hometown sentiment behind "qiaopi," and enable the spirit of mutual assistance among overseas Chinese to be continuously inherited in the new era.

Film

Karlovy Vary Festival marks 60 years with Oscar-winning icons

Czech film fest honors Hoffman and Binoche

PRAGUE, July 5, (AP): The Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in the Czech Republic kicked off its 60th edition with honors planned for actors Dustin Hoffman and Juliette Binoche.

Hoffman, who won the Academy Award for best actor for his role in "Kramer vs. Kramer" (1979) and "Rain Man" (1988), will be honored for his outstanding artistic contribution to world cinema on the opening night Friday.

On Saturday, Hoffman will present "The Graduate," his big movie from 1967 that earned him his first Academy Award nomination.

Binoche, who won an Oscar for best supporting actress in "The English Patient" (1996) and a number of other prizes, will receive the same award as Hoffman at the closing ceremony on July 11.

The festival will screen three of her movies: "Certified Copy" (2010), "Three Colors: Blue" (1993) and "In-I in Motion" (2025).

American cinematographer Robert Richardson, who is known for his work for directors Oliver Stone, Martin Scorsese and Quentin Tarantino, will be the third guest of the festival to receive the award.

Richardson, the three-time Oscar winner for best cinematography, will introduce his feature documentary portrait "Robert Richardson: The White Devil" on Saturday.

The grand jury of the festival, which takes place in the western Czech spa town of Karlovy Vary, will consider 12 movies for the top prize, the Crystal Globe.



Juliette Binoche poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'Bitter Christmas' at the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, May 19, 2026. (AP)

'Travel can also be a way of learning'

Factories in China evolve into tourism hotspots

BEIJING, July 5, (Xinhua): As summer vacation draws near, Liu Li, a mother from Beijing, signed her child up for a study tour at a high-speed train manufacturing base in Changchun, northeast China's Jilin Province.

Rather than heading to theme parks or scenic mountains, the family opted for a factory visit. "I want my child to experience firsthand the strength of China's advanced manufacturing," Liu said. "Travel can also be a way of learning."

Across the country, a growing number of tourists share the same preference. Factories, shipyards, industrial museums and manufacturing parks are attracting surging visitor flows. China, the world's manufacturing powerhouse, is seeing its factory floors become popular destinations for sightseeing, educational tours and cultural exploration.

This trend, known as industrial tourism, has received fresh support from policymakers.

Recently, the general offices of seven central ministries and departments, including the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, jointly issued a circular on promoting industrial culture, preserving industrial heritage and advancing industrial tourism. The document outlined eight priority measures, ranging from improving industrial heritage protection to expanding tourism offerings.

To date, China has designated 142 national industrial tourism demonstration bases. Industry research institutions predict that this sector will maintain average annual growth of about 18 percent between 2024 and 2029, with the market expected to exceed 300 billion yuan (about 44 billion U.S. dollars) in size. The out-



This photo taken on July 16, 2025 shows an exhibition center at the 798 Art Zone in Beijing, capital of China. (Xinhua)

line of China's 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030) calls for coordinated development of industrial tourism alongside "red tourism," rural tourism and wellness tourism.

The rising popularity of such trips mirrors a shift in Chinese consumers' travel demands. More visitors now seek travel experiences that integrate leisure with educational value.

According to data released by the online travel platform Qunar on June 30, searches for factory visits, automobile plants, shipyards and science-themed exploration trips surged by 230 percent over the past month compared with the previous month. Demand for industrial study-tour products, meanwhile, increased by more than 50 percent from a year earlier.

One of the most popular destinations is Xiaomi's automobile factory in Beijing. Opened to the public in March 2024, the 718,000-square-meter complex has hosted over

250,000 visitors to date.

Lei Jun, founder of Xiaomi Group and a deputy to the National People's Congress, has called for further efforts to improve the development environment for industrial tourism, including developing new tourism scenarios and upgrading visitor experiences. "These activities not only allow the public to experience industrial civilization through immersive encounters, but also play a vital role in science popularization, cultural inheritance, boosting employment and advancing urban renewal," he noted.

Zhu Wanfeng, a council member of the Beijing Tourism Society, said industrial tourism bridges manufacturers and consumers while meeting people's growing enthusiasm for domestic brands, industrial technologies and craftsmanship.

Industrial tourism is not a newly emerged concept. Back in 1994, production lines of China FAW Group in Changchun opened to tourists. Later,

well-preserved industrial venues including Beijing's 798 Art Zone, Shanghai Jiangnan Shipyard and Tsingtao Brewery in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province, evolved into iconic tourist landmarks.

What is changing now is the scale and ambition.

Sun Xing, deputy director of the Industrial Culture Development Center under the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, said the latest policy initiative signals a shift from general advocacy and encouragement to systematic promotion. Industrial tourism, he said, is no longer merely a tourism format, but a systematic undertaking that boosts industrial culture, urban renewal and consumption upgrading.

Sun said the broader policy framework aims to break down departmental barriers and encourage localities to develop tourism models tailored to their unique industrial resources.

The sector is underpinned by China's manufacturing strength. The country's manufacturing value-added output has ranked first globally for 16 consecutive years, while most of its major industrial products lead the world in output volume.

For some visitors, modern factories offer a glimpse into technologies shaping China's future. For others, older industrial sites provide a connection to the country's industrial past.

In Huangshi, a city in central China's Hubei Province, the former Huaxin Cement Plant remains a powerful symbol of local identity. Founded in 1907, it was among China's earliest cement producers and supplied materials for landmark national projects, including the Great Hall of the People, the Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge and the Three Gorges Dam.

Blends reading and politics

Trump features on 'Storytime' podcast alongside Usha Vance

WASHINGTON, July 5, (AP): President Donald Trump joined second lady Usha Vance on her podcast where guests read picture books to children, but Trump, who is notorious for veering off script, offered a running commentary on his predecessors, his physique, and how he's spending his time in the White House.

In Trump's appearance on Vance's "Storytime with the Second Lady" podcast, which was posted online Friday, the president read "Presidents Play!" a children's book from the White House Historical Association that features illustrations of the presidents enjoying sports and using the White House and its grounds for recreation.

Trump pretaped the appearance in mid-June in the White House's Oval Office, where the abundant gold accents he added were supplemented for the occasion with a bald eagle stuffed animal, tables made up of stacks of oversized books and a globe made out of Legos.

When Vance asked Trump if he has much time to read for fun while serving as president, he replied that he ends up mostly reading newspapers.

"I usually read stories about myself," Trump said.

As Trump turned through the children's book, he made observations about past presidents, cracked some jokes, and threw in a plug for the extensive ballroom he's building on the White House grounds.

He described Lyndon Johnson as a "tough cookie," Ronald Reagan as a "high-quality person" and "like your father was president," and John F. Kennedy as "the second-most good-looking president." Left unsaid was who Trump felt was the best-looking president.

Richard Nixon, the only president to resign the office after he became embroiled in the Watergate scandal, "got himself into trouble, I guess," Herbert Hoover, who was president during the Great Depression, was depicted in the book playing a game he made up called "Hoover Ball."

"That worked out better for him than the economy," Trump quipped.

Barack Obama, who has been a longtime object of

Trump's derision, was illustrated playing basketball.

Trump, calling him "Barack Hussein Obama," said he doubted Obama was a good basketball player. He then shared that Obama's favorite sport is golf, but added, "He won't be in the Masters anytime soon," referring to the professional golf tournament.

When he reached a page with a drawing of Bill Clinton running on the jogging track the former president installed at the White House, Trump remarked, "I don't think I'll ever do that."

But he added that he likes Clinton "a lot."

Trump mused about riding a horse after seeing a picture of Abraham Lincoln riding one.

"That's great. I'd like to ride horses, too," Trump said. "In fact, it gives me an idea, but when you fall off a horse... I've seen too many things happen. Falling off horses is not good."

The solution he suggested was "A nice old horse that's extremely slow, lazy" and that he would "maybe ride it."

A picture of John Quincy Adams swimming in what was then the Tiber Creek that ran past the South Lawn of the White House prompted Trump to remark, "I think we're building a beautiful ballroom on top of it."

Some of the other presidents' physical activity prompted some reflection on his own physique.

When he saw Gerald Ford swimming in a pool, Trump said: "I don't know if I look good in a bathing suit. I haven't had a bathing suit in a long time."

William Howard Taft, who was known for his girth, "was our heaviest president," Trump said.

"I have to be careful because I don't want to supersede his record," Trump said. "And a thing like that would be possible if I allowed it to happen. For all of you out there watching, keep yourself in good shape."

In addition to encouraging young viewers to stay in shape, Trump offered a somewhat cloudy message when the second lady asked him for his advice to children on why they should celebrate the country on July 4.

"We have a great country," Trump said. "We have a country that, it's on a little bit of a ledge right now. It can go one way or another, you understand that. But we're going to make it go the other. And we're going to make America greater than ever before."

Event highlights China's progress in tech era

China photo exhibition held in Dushanbe



Guests visit the photo exhibition showcasing China's landmark modernization achievements in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, July 1, 2026. (Xinhua/Feng Kaihua)



A guest takes photos at the photo exhibition showcasing China's landmark modernization achievements in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, July 1, 2026. (Xinhua/Feng Kaihua)

ALMATY, July 3, (Xinhua): A photo exhibition showcasing China's landmark modernization achievements was held earlier this week in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan.

Hosted at the Chinese Embassy, the selection of 30 pictures on topics ranging from technological innovation and green development to cultural heritage preservation showcased the remarkable progress made in China's socio-economic devel-

opment in the new era. The exhibition, jointly organized by the Xinhua News Agency Dushanbe Bureau, was held Wednesday alongside an interparty symposium.

Among the visitors from Tajik political parties, Maliksho Ne'matzoda, first deputy chairman of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan, said the exhibition demonstrated China's achievements at a time of accelerating technological advances, adding that Tajikistan is actively co-

operating with China to learn from the latter's experience.

Addressing the interparty symposium, Chinese Ambassador to Tajikistan Guo Zhijun said the Communist Party of China (CPC) has led the Chinese people to uncover a socialist path suited to the country's conditions, turning China from a poor, weak agricultural country into the world's second-largest economy, eliminating absolute poverty, and fundamentally changing the nation's

destiny.

China's wealth of experience accumulated in advancing national rejuvenation not only benefits itself but can also help reform the global governance system, Guo added.

Fazliddin Ikromi, first deputy head of the Agrarian Party of Tajikistan, said that for his country, China is not only a good neighbor and a reliable strategic partner, but also a key investment, economic and trade partner.

International space art, design camp launched

BEIJING, July 5, (Xinhua): An international space art and design camp was recently launched at Tsinghua University in Beijing, offering young students from around the world a platform to explore the intersection of art and aerospace technology, according to the China National Space Administration (CNSA) on Friday.

2026 International Space Art & Design Collaborative Camp opened on Thursday at Tsinghua University's Academy of Arts & Design. Co-hosted by the CNSA news center and the academy, the camp brought together more than 120 young students

from over 20 countries and regions.

The camp features six competition tracks, namely space vision, deep-space habitat, creative payloads, Off-Earth daily life experience, space computing and embodied intelligence, and space fashion and human-machine evolution.

The deep-space habitat track centers on designing future living environments for extreme locations like the Moon and Mars, addressing key issues such as digital construction, spatial organization, smart materials, life support, and resource recycling.

The Off-Earth daily life experience track centers on everyday dimensions such as diet, privacy, hygiene, biological rhythms, emotional and social interaction, and leisure and recreation. Taking into account the unique conditions of low gravity, closed-loop resource cycles, and long-duration stays, it aims to provide interstellar sojourners with daily living solutions.

Over the next two weeks, the students will join faculty from art and design institutions at home and abroad, as well as aerospace experts and scholars in an interdisciplinary practice.



A modified Long March-6 carrier rocket carrying a new satellite group blasts off from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in north China's Shanxi Province on July 4. (Xinhua)

China launches new sat group for commercial constellation

China sent a new satellite group into space on Saturday from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in north China's Shanxi Province.

The satellite group was launched at 5:30 p.m. (Beijing Time) aboard a modified Long March-6 carrier rocket and entered its preset orbit suc-

cessfully. It will form part of the Spacesail Constellation, a mega commercial Chinese low-orbit satellite network.

This launch marked the 655th flight mission of the Long March carrier rocket series, according to the launch center. (Xinhua)

Residents in e.Congo cling to hope as new Ebola treatment trial begins

BUNIA, Congo, July 5. (AP) Residents at the epicenter of Congo's Ebola outbreak are pinning their hopes on experimental treatments after researchers began a highly anticipated study in early July of two possible Ebola treatments in hopes of fighting the still-growing outbreak.

At the Ebola treatment center inside Bunia's Evangelical Medical Center, in eastern Congo's Ituri province, the launch of the research was marked by urgency rather than ceremony on Thursday.

As ambulances continued arriving and healthcare workers disappeared behind layers of protective equipment into isolation wards, the research effort unfolded quietly alongside the daily struggle to keep patients alive.

The virus causing this outbreak, called Bundibugyo, is less common than others that cause Ebola disease and there are no specific treatments or vaccines for it. Already more than 1,400 people have been diagnosed and 438 have died, the head of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said Thursday.

The WHO announced the same day that the first participant had been enrolled in the study, which is evaluating whether the antiviral remdesi-



Health workers interact at the Evangelical Medical Center, in Bunia, eastern Congo on July 3, where Ebola clinical trials are scheduled to take place. (AP)

vir, the experimental antibody treatment MBP134, or a combination of both can improve survival among patients infected with the Bundibugyo virus.

Survival will be tracked for 28 days after starting treatment, according to WHO research adviser Dr. Vasee Moorthy.

The WHO-supported trial is a collaboration between Congo's national

biomedical research institute INRB, Britain's Oxford University, Antwerp's Institute of Tropical Medicine and other international health groups.

The current trial focuses on confirmed Ebola patients receiving treatment inside specialized treatment centers, said professor Yap Boum, head of emergency response at the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

Typhoon patterns changing

Shanghai's climate stress test shows how China is building resilient cities

SHANGHAI, July 5. (Xinhua): When two typhoons made landfall in Shanghai within three days, the rare sequence became more than just a meteorological record. It was a stress test for one of China's most complex urban systems.

Typhoon Bebinca struck the city at severe typhoon intensity in September 2024. Three days later, Typhoon Pulasan followed, marking the first time since meteorological records began that Shanghai had seen two typhoons within such a short interval.

The storms highlighted a challenge facing the coastal megacity: the overlapping risks of wind, rain, storm tides and flooding brought by extreme weather.

Shanghai's exposure starts with geography. The city sits near the mouth of the Yangtze River and faces the sea, leaving it vulnerable to those overlapping risks. That vulnerability is magnified by scale -- more than 63,000 buildings of eight floors or above, 906 kilometers of rail traffic lines, 13,000 glass-curtain-wall buildings, and 267,000 outdoor advertisements and shop signs.

These figures reflect the density of a megacity. At the same time, they reveal just how many places risk can multiply during extreme weather.

"In the context of global warming, extreme wind and rain events in Shanghai are no longer accidental," said Shi Jiawen of the city's climate center. Such events, Shi said, are becoming more frequent, more intense and more sudden.

From 2021 to 2025, the maximum hourly rainfall in Shanghai's urban area rose 13.3 percent from the previous five-year period, according to Xu Shuangquan, an official with the Shanghai Water Authority. On July 31, 2025, parts of Changning, Putuo and Baoshan districts saw hourly rainfall top 100 mm, surpassing the once-in-a-century threshold.

Typhoon patterns are changing as well. Xu said global warming has contributed to a northward shift in typhoon tracks, increasing the likelihood of direct landfall in Shanghai. Bebinca and Pulasan in 2024, followed by Co-May in 2025, all struck the city head-on, a sequence he described as "historically rare."

In March 2025, Shanghai launched



This file photo taken on Sept 20, 2024 shows a citizen riding amid rainfall brought by Typhoon Pulasan in a street in Shanghai, east China. (Xinhua)

an artificial intelligence meteorological application innovation center and unveiled two self-developed AI forecasting models, Yushi ("Rain Master") and Fuyao ("Whirlwind"), which were put into operation during that year's flood season.

Yushi focuses on sudden severe convective weather affecting Shanghai, using three-dimensional radar data to capture the structure and development of thunderstorm cells.

Fuyao targets short-term heavy rainfall and thunderstorm winds, rapidly integrating radar, satellite, automatic weather stations and numerical forecast data.

The models can complete inference in 5 to 10 seconds and support updates every 10 minutes. In 13 local severe-convective episodes in 2025, Yushi extended warning lead times by 15 to 45 minutes. Early advisories for severe convection,

meanwhile, were issued an average of four hours and 20 minutes ahead of impact.

These margins are critical in emergencies, guiding pump-truck deployment, traffic controls, and targeted warnings down to the district level.

Shanghai has also formalized layered warning mechanisms. For typhoons, meteorological authorities begin monitoring, analysis and AI-based path simulations five days in advance, followed by work notices, joint consultations, warning signals and industry-specific risk alerts as landfall nears. For severe convection, where conditions change faster, the timetable is compressed, with an imminent-warning mechanism activated one hour in advance.

The other test is whether the city can move water quickly enough.

Shanghai has been upgrading chronic waterlogging sites in its central urban area since 1998. By the end of 2025, 370 sites had seen improvements. In 2026, the city planned to complete another 52. In older residential compounds, work has also targeted mixed rainwater and sewage connections, aging drainage networks and weak local discharge capacity.

Since 2024, the city has been devel-

oping a system that combines stormwater infrastructure, mobile pump trucks and emergency retention facilities. During storms, the pump trucks can collect rainwater from surrounding areas and move it into storage, allowing the water to be discharged later in staggered releases, reducing the risk of waterlogging when the drainage network is under strain.

At Heping Park in Hongkou District, a leisure space doubles as stormwater infrastructure. Sunken green areas, vegetation filtration, lowered walkways and a lake designed to regulate water levels and store stormwater help absorb heavy rain and safeguard drainage for the park and its surrounding 36-hectare area.

Digital monitoring is enhancing Shanghai's flood response. Since 2025, the city has used AI-powered video inspections to detect waterlogging risks in underpasses and other flood-prone areas. The program now covers more vulnerable locations, enabling earlier detection and faster responses.

The city is also trying to create more buffers before storms arrive. Ahead of Typhoon Co-May last year, coordinated pump-and-sludge operations lowered river network water levels to free up 150 million cubic meters of storage capacity.

Humanity must act fast to avoid worst of climate crisis, says Nobel laureate

LINDAU, Germany, July 5. (Xinhua): As extreme heatwaves sweep across Europe and climate change remains high on the global agenda, Nobel Prize-winning physicist and former U.S. Secretary of Energy **Steven Chu** has said that humanity could still avoid the worst consequences of the climate crisis, but it must act fast.



Chu

Chu made the remarks in a recent interview with Xinhua on the sidelines of the 75th Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting in Germany, which concluded on Friday.

He warned that tackling the climate crisis is like trying to turn around the Titanic after the iceberg has been spotted. Just as a giant ship cannot change its course immediately, transitioning to clean energy and more sustainable practices "would take about 50 years," said Chu. "Even if you turn as fast as you can, it may be 40 years."

Early action is essential, he underlined. "The longer we wait, the greater the chance of some kind of collision."

Chu said that current extreme weather and climate events, including more frequent heatwaves, storms,

heavy rainfall causing flooding, and rising sea levels were already anticipated 10 and 20 years ago. "We are just more aware of it now."

The deeper risk lies in the delayed effects of climate change, Chu said. Many people do not realize that today's climate impacts are only part of the problem, as "90 percent of the extra heat goes into the ocean."

Because the ocean is cold and has enormous heat capacity, it can take 50 to 100 years for that heat to be released back into the climate. "That means that we have roughly 50 years of much worse weather already baked into the system," he said.

However, Chu said some of the effects of climate change can still be reversed, but this would require removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, not merely stopping emissions.

On the global green transition, Chu said China plays an enormous role, underlining its development in photovoltaics, electric vehicles (EVs) and batteries.

In photovoltaics, Chu said, China has achieved global market leadership by making solar cells better and cheaper. He noted a similar trend in China's development of EVs and said the country has become "a pioneer" in making batteries.



Children cool off at the Hamilton Fish pool, July 18, 2017, in the Lower East Side neighborhood of New York. (AP)

Child can drown in seconds, doctors want more families to be prepared

NEW YORK, July 5. (AP) Doctors and others are sounding an alarm: More US children have been drowning in recent years.

"When drowning occurs, seconds matter," said Dr. Rohit Shenoi, the lead author of a recent American Academy of Pediatrics warning. "Quick rescue and resuscitation can mean the difference between life, death and lifelong disability."

About 4,000 to 5,000 Americans drown each year. Most are adults who die in natural bodies of water, such as lakes, ponds or oceans.

But statistically speaking, drowning is a much larger danger to children. It's the No. 1 cause of death for kids ages 1 to 4, and one of the top killers of children ages 5 to 14. The drowning rate is higher for white kids in the younger group, but much higher for Black, American Indian and Alaska Native children in the older group.

Drownings of very young children sometimes occur in bathtubs. But most, like Stewie Leonard's, occur in swimming pools.

The Stew Leonard's grocery chain offers a Disney-like shopping experience, featuring food-promoting animatronic characters like a dancing banana, a mooing cow and singing avocados. But several of its stores also have an animatronic creature that seems out of place: a life-jacketed duck named Stewie who sings about how not to drown.

The duck is named for the son of Stew Leonard, the grocery chain's chief executive. The boy was 21 months old when he drowned during a family vacation on the island of St. Martin in 1989.

More than a dozen adults and kids had gathered at a birthday party for Stewie's older sister, who was turning 3. Stew Leonard was outside hanging balloons and his wife was inside baking a cake.

"I saw Stewie outside and I assumed that he (Leonard) was watching him," said his wife, Kim, noting that other relatives also were in the area of the pool.

"We never communicated with each other; 'You've got him?'" said

Kim Leonard, now 65. "When everyone's watching, nobody's watching."

"There were a couple of balloons floating in the water," Leonard, 71, recalled. "And you know after a few minutes, sort of everybody was like, 'Where's Stewie?' Unfortunately I was the one who found him. He was face down in the pool."

His death led the couple to start a foundation that pays for children's swimming lessons and promotes drowning prevention.

Unintentional child drowning deaths in the US fell from around 2,000 a year in the 1980s to below 1,000 a year by the early 2000s, thanks in part to public awareness campaigns, expanded access to swimming lessons, and adoption of pool fencing laws. Between 2000 and 2019, health officials saw a 38% drop.

But then the trend reversed, with the number of child drowning deaths rising from 756 in 2019 to 865 in 2024, the most recent year for which complete data is available.

Red, white but rarely blue – science of fireworks colors, explained

The Conversation is an independent and non-profit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

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By Paul E. Smith
Purdue University

In the earliest days of the United States, John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail about the celebration of independence. "It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more." "Bonfires and illuminations" refer directly to what we know as pyrotechnics and firework displays.

I'm a chemist and also president of Pyrotechnics Guild International, an organization that promotes the safe use of fireworks and using them here in the U.S. to celebrate Independence Day and other festivals throughout the year. As a chemist, and someone who leads demonstrations for chemistry students, I consider fireworks a great example of combustion reactions that produce colored fire. But the invention of colored fireworks is relatively recent and not all colors are easy to produce.

Firecrackers were first invented serendipitously by the Chinese in 200 B.C. But it wasn't until one thousand years later that Chinese alchemists developed fireworks in 800 A.D. These early fireworks were mostly bright and noisy

concoctions designed to scare evil spirits - not the colorful, controlled explosions we see today. Fast forward another millennium and the Italians figured out how to add color by introducing various elements to the flammable mix. Adding the element strontium to a color pyrotechnic mix produces a red flame; copper, blue; barium, green; and sodium for yellow.

Too much or too little of the chemicals make significant changes in the temperature and thus the wavelength of color seen. The proper mixture of chemicals when ignited produce enough energy to excite electrons to give off different colors of light.

Even though the chemistry of these colors isn't new, each generation seems to get excited by the colors splashed across the sky. We now have a wide range of flame colors: red, green, blue, yellow, purple, and variations of these.

Each color works the same way. As different elements ignite they release different wavelengths of light which translate as different colors.

Not all colors of fireworks are equally easy to create. I believe several of my colleagues in pyrotechnic research and development would agree with me that blue is the most difficult color to produce.

That is because the evening sky is a shade of blue, which means that most blues do not show up as well. If you try to make the blue brighter to contrast with the background it can look washed out. The right balance of copper and other chemicals in the flame or combustion reaction produce the best blue color flame in a firework. (AP)

Company clarifies position and reiterates commitment to the project

Al-Baker handball proposal still under discussion at Qadsia

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The proposal submitted by Fahad Al-Baker, a member of Qadsia Club's General Assembly, to convert and manage the club's first handball team as a commercial entity remains in a phase of ongoing review, with both sides continuing to exchange views after initial approval in principle from the club's board of directors.

Qadsia had previously given preliminary approval to the idea of transferring the management of the handball team to an independent commercial structure led by Al-Baker, while attaching a set of conditions that must be met before moving toward a final agreement.

In its formal letter to Al-Baker International Import & Export Company, the club clarified that the project could proceed only after several key requirements are addressed. These include defining whether the proposal is limited to the first team or extends to all age categories, and submitting a full operational and financial plan covering salaries for technical and administrative staff, player contracts, foreign professionals, bonuses, and all related running costs.

The club also requested a bank guarantee equal to the team's full seasonal budget to ensure financial commitments are secured and contractual obligations are fully met. It further emphasized that the existing agreement related to the development and operation of Court No. 3 remains valid, and that any new investment must not conflict with current contracts or affect the club's assets.

In reply, the Company issued a detailed statement addressing Qadsia's remarks, providing legal and administrative clarifications while reaffirming its commitment to the initiative.

The company stressed that the goal of the proposal is to support Qadsia Club and restore its handball program to its competitive standing, arguing that the success of the project would serve the club as a whole.

It also stated that the financial issues referenced by the club are unrelated to the entity submitting the proposal.

The company explained that the case in question is still under judicial review and has not reached a final ruling, meaning it cannot be treated as an established debt or used as a reason to delay or reject the project.

Furthermore, the company underlined that the applicant is a legally independent entity with separate financial liability, and therefore should not be linked to disputes involving other parties.

Al-Baker's side added that the proposal should be assessed on its sporting, administrative, and financial merits, focusing on its potential to benefit Qadsia Club rather than external considerations.

It also highlighted the credibility of Fahad Abdulrahman Al-Baker, noting his previous two-season tenure managing Qadsia's handball team, during which all financial obligations were reportedly settled without any outstanding dues, according to club records.

The company further pointed to his history of sponsorships and support initiatives for Qadsia teams, stating that all commitments were fulfilled in full and without disputes.



Opposition player drives toward goal under heavy pressure from two Qadsia SC defenders, battling for control in a crowded challenge.

Leclerc ends 2-year drought with chaotic Silverstone win

Hamilton denied late charge



Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc of Monaco leads at the start and followed by Ferrari driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain and Mercedes driver Andrea Kimi Antonelli of Italy during the British F1 Grand Prix, in Silverstone, England. Inset: Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc of Monaco celebrates on the podium after winning the British F1 Grand Prix. (AP)

SILVERSTONE, England, July 5, (AP): Charles Leclerc took his first Formula 1 win in nearly two years as a chaotic British Grand Prix ended behind the safety car on Sunday and standings leader Kimi Antonelli missed the points again with a damaged car.

Leclerc surged past Antonelli at the start as the Mercedes driver dropped to third but the Italian was chasing Leclerc down in the final laps when he reported a steering problem. Leclerc took the

win under the safety car after a spectacular spin into the gravel from third by Max Verstappen.

"Finally!" Leclerc said over the radio after taking the win. "This one felt particularly good, even if I wished it was a more normal ending."

Leclerc leaped out of his car and ran to a crowd of Ferrari staff who surged forward to embrace him, toppling a crowd barrier onto their driver. Leclerc's last F1 victory was at the United States Grand Prix in October 2024.

After Antonelli reported issues with his car, he came into the pits but that didn't help and he started dropping back through the field. Later, Verstappen's spin shook up the race again.

Antonelli's Mercedes teammate and title rival

George Russell went on to second to deny Ferrari a one-two finish, staying out on old tires when Lewis Hamilton came into the pits under the safety car.

Hamilton had fresh tires but couldn't use them because the race finished behind the safety car. He crossed the line third.

Hamilton was also facing an investigation after the race for allegedly infringing yellow-flag conditions around the time he lost the place to Russell.

Antonelli was ninth across the line after ignoring the team's pleas to retire the car so he could fight for the final points places. He ended up outside the points anyway. The Italian dropped to 16th with a time penalty for going off-track as he wrangled his damaged car around the corners.

Scotland holds off Argentina in a thriller

South Africa rips England with 3-try blitz

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa, July 5, (AP): South Africa tore apart England 45-21 after a stunning three-try blastoff in Nations Championship rugby at Ellis Park on Saturday.

The shock and awe start by the Springboks for a 17-0 lead inside the first 12 minutes gave the double world champions a cushion they rode to their biggest win over England in 18 years.

The English impressively fought back to trail by only three at half-time but they succumbed to South Africa's heavy carries and ruthless finishing, and were down to 13 players at fulltime.

England has suffered five straight losses on the back of a 12-match winning streak.

Springboks coach Rassie Erasmus rated the performance as "above average" after they were forced in the morning to play debutant Paul de Villiers and one-cap Cameron Hanekom in the back row, and move star flanker Pieter-Steph du Toit into lock.

Captain Siya Kolisi was ruled out by a hamstring issue and Eben Etzebeth by a head knock. England also had to reshuffle when fullback George Furbank was sidelined by appendicitis after working two years on his test recall.

"If you buy into the system and understand the system, the system will take care of the player," Pieter-Steph du Toit said. "That's the nice thing about us at the moment is that we've got a really good system."

The late changes to the Springboks were made light of by the explosive start.

England was barely sweating when Boks fullback Damian Wil-



South Africa's Ruan Nortje, center, is tackled by England's Asher Opoku-Fordjour, bottom, during the Nations Championship Test rugby match between South Africa and England, in Johannesburg. (AP)

lemse charged the tryline and prop Thomas du Toit burrowed over in the third minute. A Willems chip and catch was followed by prop Ox Nche shrugging off England's Ollie Chessum and Jamie George and shooting away for Cheslin Kolbe to cross in the right corner. Kolbe converted his try.

Nche left with a knee injury that Erasmus called serious but moments later Kurt-Lee Arendse swept past Marcus Smith and over in the left corner. The first three entries into the England 22 netted three rampant tries and the crowd of 52,790 was partying.

Arendse was sin-binned for a deliberate knock-on and his absence was exposed well by England's Fin Smith and namesake Marcus Smith to get a foothold in the game.

Stand-in skipper George had a try ruled out for being offside but team-

mate Ellis Genge tapped a penalty to himself and crashed over, then lock George Martin bulldozed Jasper Wiese and Kolbe to score his first try for England.

Down only 17-14, the visitors had physical momentum but in the new half they were slow out of the blocks again and South Africa was clinical.

Boks scrumhalf Grant Williams dummied and crossed for the bonus-point fourth try in the 45th minute, and Kolbe added the extras as he kicked better the longer the match went in his 50th test.

Center Jesse Kriel was next to score. The South Africa procession was interrupted by England's Alex Coles then resumed after Tommy Freeman and Guy Pepper were the visitors' ninth and 10th yellow cards this year.

South Africa completed the rout

with converted tries to Malcolm Marx and Ben-Jason Dixon for their highest score and margin against England since a 42-6 result in 2008 at Twickenham.

Next Saturday, England returns home to play Fiji while South Africa hosts Scotland.

Meanwhile, Hooker Gregor Hiddleston scored a crucial try on debut as Scotland finished strongly to beat Argentina 47-38 Saturday in the first round of rugby's Nations Championship.

Scotland was under severe pressure with a two point lead and a man in the sin bin with 15 minutes remaining.

Hiddleston's try gave Scotland breathing space and it finished powerfully with a try to Kyle Rowe to win by seven tries to five and post its highest-ever score against Argentina. The win avenged Scotland's 33-24 loss to Argentina in Edinburgh in the autumn.

Scotland had to overcome strong starts by Argentina in both halves. Joaquin Oviedo scored the first try of the match in the seventh minute but Scotland rallied with tries to captain Sione Tuipulotu, Pierre Shoeman and Rory Hutchinson to lead 19-10 at halftime.

Winger Rodrigo Isgro scored for Argentina in the second minute of the second half to cut the lead to two points. But Scotland responded emphatically with tries to Gregor Brown and Scott Cummings, both playing their 50th tests.

A try to Tomas Rapetti in the 65th minute reduced Scotland's lead to nine points and the pressure increased when winger Jamie Dobie was sent to the sin bin over team infringements.

Federation lauds Rabat success

Kuwait's claim doubles golds

RABAT, July 5: Kuwait's national tennis pair, Essa Qabazard and Bader Al-Abdullah, won the men's doubles title at the Morocco International Professional Tennis Tournament, which concluded in Rabat, earning a gold medal after a standout performance throughout the competition.

The Kuwaiti duo sealed the championship by defeating the tournament's second-seeded French team of Mathieu Champonnier and Edouard Veloslada in the final, rallying to win in three sets.

Abdul Redha Jassim Al-Ghareeb, President of the Kuwait Tennis Federation, praised the achievement, saying it represents another milestone for Kuwaiti sport and reflects the continued progress of the country's tennis program.

He added that the Kuwait delegation, led by national team coach Abdullah Muqaddas, and including players Essa Qabazard, Bader Al-Abdullah, Abdulhamid Mubarak, and Ali Al-Shatti, will head to Bucharest immediately after the event to compete in the Romania International Professional Tennis Tournament.

The upcoming tournament forms part of Kuwait's preparations for the



Kuwait duo Essa Qabazard and Bader Al-Abdullah celebrate winning the men's doubles title at the Morocco International Professional Tennis Tournament.

Davis Cup qualifying competition, scheduled to take place in Sri Lanka later this month.

Al-Ghareeb also thanked the Public Authority for Sport for its ongoing support of Kuwait's national teams, emphasizing that its backing has enabled athletes across all age groups to compete regularly in major international tournaments.

Overseas camp set for September

Al-Mousawi named Burgan coach

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Burgan Club has appointed national coach Yaqoub Al-Mousawi as head coach of its senior handball team for the 2026-27 season, marking a move aimed at maintaining the club's momentum following its recent achievements and preparing for a demanding campaign at both the domestic and international levels.

Al-Mousawi returns to the role after previously leading Burgan during the last season before the campaign was cut short due to the regional situation.

He now takes charge as the Asian champions prepare for a series of major competitions, headlined by the IHF Men's Club World Championship, which will be staged in Cairo from September 25 to October 1.

Burgan's management said the appointment reflects its commitment to preserving technical continuity and building on the project that has elevated the club among Asia's elite handball teams, following its historic victory in the Asian Club Championship, held in Kuwait last month.

The club expressed complete confidence in Al-Mousawi's ability to lead the team through the next phase, emphasizing the importance of teamwork and continuity to sustain its recent success and pursue further honors.

Al-Mousawi said the squad will begin preparations for the Club



Burgan Club's new coach, Yaqoub Al-Mousawi.

World Championship later this month before departing for an overseas training camp in early September, with the destination yet to be finalized.

He added that he is currently working with the club's handball department to finalize the technical and physical preparation program for the new season, while evaluating the team's requirements in both local and overseas talent to assemble a squad capable of challenging for every title.

The coach also confirmed that Burgan is studying the profiles of several foreign players and will carefully select the most suitable reinforcements to strengthen the squad for the Club World Championship and the 2026-27 season.

Best of the Rest

Germany wins gold: Germany beat Denmark 33-26 in the final to win the gold medal at the 2026 IHF Women's Junior Handball World Championship in Jinzhong, China, on Sunday.

France clinched the bronze medal with a 24-21 win over Spain, which finished fourth.

Germany, which last won this tournament in 2008, built a 15-14 lead in the first half before pulling away in the last ten minutes of the second half. (Xinhua)

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Madrid signs right back Dumfries: Real Madrid confirmed on Sunday the signing of Netherlands international defender Denzel Dumfries from Inter Milan on a four-year contract.

The 30-year-old right back completed the move after the Netherlands' World Cup campaign ended, having delayed confirmation of the transfer until his country's tournament was over.

Madrid paid Dumfries' 20 million euro (23 million U.S. dollar) release clause to secure the defender, who is expected to help fill the void left by Dani Carvajal. The veteran right back departed at the end of last season after his contract was not renewed.

Dumfries will compete with Trent Alexander-Arnold for a place in the starting lineup. (Xinhua)



Kuwait holds unique World Cup record as first Arab opponent of France

PHILADELPHIA, July 5: France advanced to the 2026 World Cup quarter-finals after a narrow 1-0 win over Paraguay in Philadelphia, setting up a high-profile clash with Morocco in a repeat of the 2022 semi-final.

France captain Kylian Mbappé scored the decisive goal in the 70th minute from the penalty spot, awarded after a VAR review, sending "Les Bleus" into the last eight.

The strike was Mbappé's seventh of the tournament, drawing him level with Argentina star Lionel Messi at the top of the scoring chart. It also marked a milestone for France, becoming their 150th goal in World Cup history.

Encounters with Arab teams have often played a key role in France's World Cup journeys, frequently serving as stepping stones toward deeper progress in the tournament.

The upcoming quarter-final against Morocco will be the sixth World Cup meeting between France and Arab nations. Their previous five encounters include:

France vs Kuwait (1982 World Cup)

The first meeting dates back 44 years, when France defeated Kuwait 4-1 in the group stage of the 1982 World Cup in Spain. France's goals came from Bernard Genghini, Michel Platini, Didier Six, and Maxime Bossis, while Abdullah Al-Baloushi scored for Kuwait. The result helped France continue its run to the semi-finals, where they eventually finished fourth after losing to Poland in the third-place match.

France vs Saudi Arabia (1998 World Cup)

During France's 1998 title-winning campaign, it opened its tournament with a 4-0 win over Saudi Arabia. Thierry Henry scored twice, with further goals from Bixente Lizarazu and David Trezeguet. The match also saw a red card for Zinedine Zidane and Saudi defender Mohammed Al-Khilaifi.

France vs Tunisia and Morocco (2022 World Cup)

In Qatar 2022, France faced two Arab teams on its way to the final. Tunisia beat France 1-0 in its final group match through Wahbi Khazri at Education City Stadium. France later eliminated Morocco 2-0 in the semi-finals at Al Bayt Stadium, with goals from Theo Hernandez and Randal Kolo Muani.

France vs Iraq (2026 World Cup)

In the current edition, France also met Iraq in Group I, winning 3-0 in its second group-stage match under coach Didier Deschamps.



In this file photo, Kuwaiti player tackles Michel Platini during the 1982 World Cup match between Kuwait and France.

Fan Zone



Supporters light up World Cup during the Round of 16 matches with chants and celebrations. (AP)

US players & Pochettino represent diversity of America on July Fourth

World Cup fans celebrate America's 250th birthday in Philadelphia and Houston

SEATTLE, July 5, (AP): Less than 24 hours removed from throwing out the first pitch at a Seattle Mariners game alongside his team, U.S. coach Mauricio Pochettino extended some unexpected birthday wishes.

They were not directed toward forward Folarin Balogun, who turned 25 on Friday, but rather the country the two are representing at the World Cup. Saturday marked the 250th anniversary of American independence, which was cause for celebration in Pochettino's eyes before practice at Husky Soccer Stadium.

"Happy birthday," Pochettino said to reporters as he circled the pitch. "It's 250 years, no?"

The 54-year-old coach, who was born in Argentina and lives in Spain, has fully embraced the American experience this summer. Pochettino has joined tens of thousands of fans in singing John Denver's "Take Me Home, Country Roads" after U.S. wins - all while not letting his players forget his roots.

"He's 200 percent Argentine," U.S. captain Tim Ream said. "I think he's obviously taken to the culture, and at the same time has added his bit of culture to us as well. ... The group is such a melting pot of staff, players. And, it's just an incredible representation of who we are as people. But, he definitely won't let us forget that he still is Argentine at the end of the day."

Pochettino isn't the only member of the team with roots outside the United States. Six players on the roster were born abroad, while others like Balogun were raised in Europe.

Balogun was born in the New York City borough of Brooklyn to Nigerian parents, but raised in London. He could have played for any of three countries, yet chose to play for the U.S.

"This is a unique experience for me," Balogun said, "being in the World Cup in your home nation."

Many Americans are still lukewarm about soc-



United States' Chris Richards (3) and United States' Timothy Weah, back, celebrate winning the World Cup round of 32 soccer match between the United States and Bosnia in Santa Clara, Calif., near San Francisco. (AP)

cer. Its popularity lags behind American football, basketball and baseball.

But new polling from Ipsos Sports, provided exclusively to The Associated Press, shows that the World Cup has excited soccer fans and piqued many Americans' interest, even as the sport faces an uphill climb to reach mainstream popularity.

On Monday at Lumen Field, the U.S. has an opportunity to further invigorate its fans when it plays Belgium in the Round of 16. A victory would mark the first time the Americans have ever won two knockout games at the World Cup, while securing their second quarterfinal appearance and first since 2002.

"(An) opportunity to continue to inspire tens of millions of people, inspire kids," Ream said. "It's an opportunity for us to win another knockout-stage game in a World Cup."

The U.S. will need contributions from its diverse roster. Starters like Weston McKennie and Sergio Dest, for instance, are the children of U.S. service members.

Dest is confident the Americans can win on Monday, even after Belgium blew out the U.S. 5-2

in a World Cup warmup match in March.

"Belgium is a great opponent," Dest said. "But, we also see some opportunities for us to be able to win that game. 'Cause we are also a great team at the moment. We grew a lot, as well, in this tournament. And, at the moment, it's really difficult to beat us. So, it will be difficult for Belgium as well."

Saturday provided an opportunity for Ream and his teammates to celebrate the American holiday by watching fireworks from a rooftop bar. Ream previously played for Fulham of the Premier League before returning to the United States with Charlotte of Major League Soccer.

"It's a little bit different celebrating here than over there because obviously, in a lot of ways, a lot of people don't actually know why we celebrate the Fourth," Ream said, "which is crazy to me, because they were a big part of why we celebrate the Fourth."

The U.S. hopes to close out the holiday weekend by winning Monday night, with a team that is quintessentially American in Ream's eyes.

"With all our different backgrounds, where we all have grown up, it's a true representation of what America is," Ream said. "It's a melting pot of people, personalities, of characters. It's the perfect representation of what the U.S. is."

Fireworks crackled and jets roared ahead of the France-Paraguay World Cup game in Philadelphia on Saturday as fans celebrated the double joy of soccer's biggest tournament on home soil and the 250th anniversary of American independence in the nation's birthplace.

A pregame show celebrating the city's history included Tony Award winner Idina Menzel singing "The Star-Spangled Banner" a star-shaped stage. The Philadelphia-formed hip-hop band The Roots also performed, backed by dancers, including a "Lady Liberty" draped in a monumental gown, and fireworks in red, white and blue. The Philadelphia Boys Choir & Chorale then sang an a cappella rendition of "America the Beautiful."

World Cup Diary

Players at WC need more protection: The FIFPRO players union said on Saturday that more must be done to protect footballers from racist abuse at the World Cup being held in North America.

The Netherlands-based union said in a statement that players are suffering from "a growing pattern of abuse" on social media and in person.

"In recent weeks, players have faced abuse online and in person, much of it racist and discriminatory," the union said. "There has been intimidation and hostility beyond the pitch. These incidents are not isolated; they point to a systemic pattern that cannot remain an accepted part of football or society." The union did not give specific examples of abusive incidents, but the Netherlands Football Association said after the Dutch were eliminated by Morocco in the round of 32 that some players had been "treated in a racist and discriminatory manner." FIFPRO asked for soccer authorities, public officials and private institutions "to increase their efforts as monitoring and reporting alone cannot change behavior or prevent harm." (AP)

Renard parts ways with Tunisia: Herve Renard has stepped down as manager of Tunisia after the team's group-stage elimination from the FIFA World Cup 2026.

The 57-year-old Frenchman had replaced Sabri Lamouchi after Tunisia lost to Sweden 5-1 in their group-stage opener on June 14.

"My adventure ends here," Renard said in a social media post on Saturday, thanking the Tunisian Football Federation for the opportunity to lead the team. Under Renard's command, Tunisia lost 4-0 to Japan and 3-1 to the Netherlands, finishing last in Group F.

His previous coaching experience has included spells in charge of Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Cote d'Ivoire and Angola. (Xinhua)

Ghana falls quiet after exit: The streets of Ghana's capital, Accra, and the surrounding areas fell quiet after the country's men's football team, the Black Stars, was eliminated from the World Cup.

The usual wild jubulations on the streets, in pubs, restaurants, and various homes that characterized matches were nonexistent at the end of Ghana's round of 32 encounter with Colombia.

Football fans who had to stay awake to watch the Black Stars from 01:30 a.m. GMT left the streets and retreated to their beds after the defeat. (Xinhua)

For Cape Verde, World Cup run means many things will change

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla., July 5, (AP): Cape Verde's World Cup team walked into its Miami hotel after getting eliminated from the tournament, almost in disbelief at the scene in the lobby.

Dozens of people were there, cheering for them.

After a loss, no less.

Let that be the first sign of how things are going to be very different in many respects for the team, at least for the foreseeable future. Such is the case when a club goes from unheralded - and practically unheard of - to taking Lionel Messi and Argentina to the brink of elimination on soccer's biggest stage, before falling 3-2 in a match that went to extra time.

"It's time to rest and think about the future," Cape Verde goalkeeper Vozinha said. "But I am very, very proud of the team's work, and I hope that in the future we can achieve great things."

In other words, he hopes seeds were planted.

Cape Verde went 0-1-3 in its four matches at its inaugural World Cup, which won't look great on paper. More than two-thirds of the 48 teams in this tournament won at least one game; Cape Verde wasn't one of them.

But the record simply doesn't tell the whole story.

It played Spain to a scoreless draw to open the group stage, making the chance of advancing to the knockout stage very real. There were two more ties in group play - a 2-2 tie against Uruguay that put



Cape Verde's Sidney Lopes Cabral celebrates after scoring his side's 2nd goal against Argentina during the World Cup round of 32 soccer match in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

Cape Verde on the brink of advancing, then a 0-0 tie against Saudi Arabia that was good enough to get the round of 32 trip secured.

Argentina's players and coaches, to their credit, insisted they did not expect a cakewalk past Cape Verde. And when the match was over, Messi - generally considered to be the greatest player of all time - had nothing but compliments for the underdog opponent.



Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar, left, and Mexico's Isaac Del Toro celebrate as they cross the finish line of the second stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Tarragone and finish in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

Sports

Clinical Morocco underlines title credentials



Players of Morocco react after the World Cup round of 16 soccer match against Canada in Houston. (AP)

Atlas Lions seal quarterfinals spot

HOUSTON, July 5, (AP): Morocco is heading back to the quarterfinals and coach Mohamed Ouahbi believes his team has established itself among soccer's elite.

Azzedine Ounahi scored twice to lead Morocco to a 3-0 win over Canada in the World Cup round of 16 to make the country the first African nation to reach the quarterfinals more than once.

"We are no longer a surprise," Ouahbi said through a translator. "Now when people talk about Morocco we're a major contender and it's a great source of pride. I think it's only the beginning and I hope we continue to have runs like this."

And despite already making history in this World Cup, Morocco has much higher goals.

"We want to keep going," Ouahbi said. "We don't want to stop."

It's Morocco's second straight appearance in the round of eight after becoming the first African team to reach the semifinals in 2022.

"We are so proud to represent Africa because it's a continent with a lot of talent and Africa deserves to be in the best level in football," Morocco goal-



Morocco's Sofyan Amrabat (4), left, and Canada's Ali Ahmed (20) battle for the ball during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Canada and Morocco in Houston. (AP)

keeper Yassine Bounou said.

Neither team was able to break through until Ounahi took a free kick from Achraf Hakimi and made a right-footed shot through traffic from outside the box to the bottom right corner to put Morocco on top 1-0 in the 50th minute.

Ounahi made it 2-0 on a right-footed shot from the middle of the box off a pass from Brahim Díaz in the 82nd minute.

Soufiane Rahimi added a goal in the final minute of stoppage time.

Morocco advances to face France which beat Paraguay 1-0 on Thursday at Boston Stadium.

The loss ends a historic run for World Cup co-host Canada, which won its first-ever knockout round with a 1-0 victory over South Africa to reach Saturday's match. The country was playing in the World Cup for just the third time and the run enchanted a nation that is normally far more interested in hockey than the pitch.

Canada coach Jesse Marsch shared his postgame message to the team.

"I told them that I was proud of them and I challenged them to understand that we can play like this all the time against the best teams in the world," he said. "We can be better on the day. And then the challenge is, can we hold that standard for 90 minutes?"

Morocco, which is ranked sixth in the FIFA rankings, dispatched the Netherlands in a penalty shootout to reach the round of 16 and send the country to its earliest World Cup exit.

Though Marsch mistakenly said Morocco is ranked one spot lower than it is, he lauded how his team performed against a squad of its caliber and of how Canada controlled the match for much of the day.

"The way we pushed, the way we were in the match, the quality we showed, the overall impact in the match, we were better," he said. "We were better than the No. 7 team in the world today."

Ouahbi had a strong response when told of those comments.

"In terms of intensity they were good," he said. "They were good for 98 minutes. Were they better? It's hard to say. It takes some nerve to say that when you lose 3-nil."

Canada had a couple of chances to score late. Jonathan David had a free kick from outside the box in the 78th minute, but his shot sailed over the crossbar.

Just after that Tajon Buchanan's shot from about 30 yards was stopped with a diving save from Bounou. Bounou, who was born in Canada to Moroccan parents, had three saves to help Morocco to the win.

World Cup Fixtures

Portugal vs Spain 22:00

Tuesday

US vs Belgium 03:00

Egypt vs Argentina 19:00

Switzerland vs Colombia 23:00

Paraguay gets physical in heated loss

Mbappé continues hot form, France reaches quarterfinals

PHILADELPHIA, July 5, (AP): Kylian Mbappé laughed and smiled - and scored, of course - when Paraguay tried to bait him and his French teammates into fouls and provoke fights, as hot heads became a recurring theme during one of the steamiest World Cup games on record.

After the final whistle, Mbappé kept on walking and left Paraguayan goalkeeper Orlando Gill hanging as Gill extended his right hand in a show of sportsmanship.

In response, Gill threw the ball right at the No. 10 on Mbappé's jersey.

Mbappé got the last laugh as he scored his 19th career World Cup goal, and France survived stifling heat to beat Paraguay 1-0 on Saturday, sending Les Bleus into the quarterfinals for the fourth straight time.

"We knew what kind of match it was going to be," Mbappé said in French. "We can also get our hands dirty, we know how to do it. We know how to play ugly football. Guess they were thinking we were going to show up in tuxedos, but we were ready."

France advanced to play Morocco on Thursday in Foxborough, Massachusetts.

With an extreme heat warning in effect throughout the match as temperatures hovered around 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 Celsius), Mbappé finally broke through against a physical, defensive-minded Paraguay side when he converted a



France's Kylian Mbappe (10) celebrates his team victory at the end of the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Paraguay and France in Philadelphia. (AP)

penalty kick in the 70th minute.

That was enough for Les Bleus, whose red, white and blue-clad fans looked plenty patriotic on July Fourth in the city where the United States was founded exactly 250 years earlier.

Mbappé was awarded the penalty when Diego Gomez was called for tripping after a video review. Then he stutter-stepped on his way to his 19th goal in 19 World Cup appear-

ances, one behind career record holder Lionel Messi of Argentina. Mbappé and Messi each have seven goals in this tournament to top the Golden Boot race.

Mbappé won that award four years ago in Qatar, but Messi and Argentina beat France in the final.

Mbappé - who frequently trash-talked the Paraguayans in Spanish - is now the only player to score at least three goals in the knockout stage of three World Cups.

Mbappé botched a breakaway attempt in the second half, and Manu Koné had his top-corner shot knocked away by Gill after he was wiped out in the netting by Ousmane Dembélé only moments earlier.

Gill also stopped two strong attempts by Mbappé in second-half stoppage time.

"Without that penalty, we would have taken it to extra time," Gill said.

For the criticism that hydration breaks have watered down the pace of play at the World Cup, they were never more needed for the players than in the midst of a miserable heat wave. Sprinklers showered the Kentucky bluegrass field during the breaks and at halftime.

More than in any of the five other World Cup games played before 68,000-plus fans at Lincoln Financial Field, spectators fled for the concourse at halftime, seeking shade and refuge from the sun.

Maybe they were looking for some action of any kind.

'Survive to thrive'

Djokovic breaks Federer's record

LONDON, July 5, (AP): Novak Djokovic screamed out his frustrations at times before overcoming a surprisingly tough challenge from 132nd-ranked qualifier Roman Safiullin on Sunday to break one of Roger Federer's Wimbledon records.

Djokovic had to save two set points when trailing 5-2 in the first set and was warned for apparently screaming out an obscenity in Serbian on Centre Court when he was broken early in the third. But the seven-time Wimbledon champion went on to win 7-6 (6), 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 for his 106th match victory at the All England Club.

That puts him one ahead of Federer atop the all-time list for men, although he still trails Martina Navratilova's 120 match wins.

It also puts him into the quarterfinals for the 17th time - one behind Federer's record - and three matches away from joining his former rival on eight Wimbledon titles. But the Serb acknowledged that he will have to raise his game in order to get there.

"Survive to thrive, that's how I feel," Djokovic said when asked to sum up his first week of the championships. "So hopefully the thriving part is coming."

The 39-year-old Djokovic has never lost a Grand Slam match against a player ranked as low as Safiullin, or to a qualifier, but looked in danger at times on Centre Court.

Djokovic seemed to struggle with the sunny and windy conditions in the first set before rallying from 5-2 to force a tiebreaker, where he converted his third set point. In the third, he got the warning from the umpire after going 2-0 down and then drew boos from the crowd when he hit the ball away in



Novak Djokovic of Serbia returns the ball to Roman Safiullin of Russia in their fourth round men's singles match at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (AP)

frustration after losing the set.

In his on-court interview, he apologized for what he called "the outbursts, the meltdowns."

"I had a few of those today," he said.

Djokovic, who is renowned for his ability to chase down almost every shot, also acknowledged that he opted to play more at the net than usual after repeatedly being outplayed in long rallies by Safiullin.

"I don't get to feel inferior from the back of court with too many players, to be honest, throughout my career," Djokovic said. "Today it was one of those days where I didn't want to stay in the rally for too long. So I had to mix things up. And it worked."

He quickly seized control in the fourth set by jumping out to a 3-0

lead, and then served out the match at love.

Djokovic will next play the winner between third-seeded Felix Auger-Aliassime and No. 22 Alejandro Davidovich Fokina.

There will be a new women's champion at Wimbledon for the ninth straight time after Barbora Krejčíková lost to fellow Czech player Karolína Muchová in the fourth round.

Krejčíková, the 2024 winner, was the only former champion left in the women's draw after Iga Świątek, Elena Rybakina and Serena Williams all went out earlier.

Krejčíková followed suit with a 7-5, 5-7, 6-3 loss on No. 2 Court.

No woman has won multiple Wimbledon titles since Williams won her seventh in 2016.

Pogacar gifts victory to teammate Del Toro on 2nd stage of Tour, Vingegaard keeps lead

BARCELONA, July 5, (AP): Defending champion Tadej Pogacar gifted victory to his teammate Isaac Del Toro on the second stage of the Tour de France while Jonas Vingegaard retained the overall lead on Sunday.

Del Toro attacked on the 700-meter climb to the finish to put Pogacar in a position to win, but Pogacar instead slowed down and put his arm on the Mexican rider's shoulder as he let him cross the line first. The 22-year-old Del Toro looked open-mouthed with surprise at the sporting gesture from Pogacar, who is looking to win the race for the third straight time and fifth overall.

As an exhausted Del Toro sat on the ground to get his breath back on a hot day,

Pogacar went over to tightly hug his UAE Emirates-XRG teammate, who looked emotional after clinching his first Tour stage win.

Belgium rider Remco Evenepoel finished the stage in third place, just ahead of Vingegaard in fourth spot. The top four all clocked a time of 3 hours, 40 minutes, 1 second, but with the top three receiving time bonuses, Vingegaard's lead over Pogacar was trimmed from 12 seconds to six seconds.

Vingegaard is looking to win the Tour for the third time after triumphing in 2022 and '23. The Danish rider took the yellow jersey on Saturday after leading his Visma-Lease a Bike team to victory in the opening-day time trial around Barcelona.

Stage 2 on Sunday took riders on a hilly 168.5-kilometer (104.5-mile) route starting from the Catalan city of Tarragona, and featured three ascents to the 17th century Montjuïc castle before ending in Barcelona.

Two breakaway riders - Dutchman Alex Molenaar and German Felix Engelhardt - were caught with about 30 kilometers to go.

As the peloton increased its speed, Vingegaard and Pogacar positioned themselves near the front to minimize the risk of being caught in a crash. Mindful of Pogacar launching one of his trademark sudden attacks, Vingegaard sat on Pogacar's wheel on the climbs.